

MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA
MANSFIELD PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

Monday, October 1, 2012 ▪ 7:05 PM

(or upon completion of Inland Wetland Agency Meeting)

Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building ▪ 4 South Eagleville Road ▪ Council Chambers

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

3. Approval of Minutes

- a. September 4, 2012 Regular Meeting
- b. September 19, 2012 Field Trip Minutes

4. Zoning Agent's Report

- Monthly Activity Update
- Enforcement Update
- Other

5. Public Hearings

7:05 p.m.

New Special Permit Application, Assembly/Banquet Hall and associated uses, 476 Storrs Road; Healey, owner/applicant: PZC File #1312

Memos from Director of Planning and Development, Assistant Town Engineer, Fire Marshal,

7:15 p.m.

Application to Amend the Mansfield Zoning Map-Storrs Center Special Design District/Master Plan, Storrs Center Alliance, LLC, owner/applicant: PZC File #1246-10

Memo from Director of Planning and Development

6. Old Business

- a. **New Special Permit Application, Assembly/Banquet Hall and associated uses, 476 Storrs Road; Healey, owner/applicant: PZC File #1312**
- b. **Application to Amend the Mansfield Zoning Map-Storrs Center Special Design District/Master Plan, Storrs Center Alliance, LLC, owner/applicant: PZC File #1246-10**
- c. **New Special Permit Application, 54 residential apartments, 73 Meadowbrook Lane, Whispering Glen-Lakeway Farms, L.P., owner/applicant: PZC File #1284-2**
(Tabled pending 10/15/12 Public Hearing)
- d. **Subdivision Pre-Application: North Windham Road, PZC File #1311**
Memo from Director of Planning and Development
- e. **Draft Connecticut Conservation and Development Policies Plan (2013-2018)**
Update from Director of Planning and Development
- f. **Other**

Binu Chandy ▪ JoAnn Goodwin ▪ Roswell Hall III ▪ Katherine Holt ▪ Gregory Lewis ▪ Peter Plante
Barry Pociask ▪ Kenneth Rawn ▪ Bonnie Ryan ▪ Alex Marcellino (A) ▪ Vera Stearns Ward (A) ▪ Susan Westa (A)

7. New Business

- a. **Eastbrook Mall Modification Request, PZC File #1307**
Memo from Director of Planning and Development
- b. **Special Permit Application, Seasonal Aerial Forest Ropes Course, west of Baxter Road on Storrs Road; Kueffner/Stoddard, owner/applicant: PZC File #1313**
- c. **Live Music Permit Renewals**
Memo from Zoning Agent
- d. **E.O. Smith Lighting Request**
Memo from Director of Planning and Development
- e. **Appointment of Rudy Favretti to Design Review Panel**

8. Other

9. Reports from Officers and Committees

- a. **Chairman's Report**
- b. **Regional Planning Commission**
- c. **Regulatory Review Committee**
- d. **Planning and Development Director's Report**
- e. **Other**

10. Communications and Bills

- a. **Planners Web Article- Building a New Downtown-Part I**
- b. **9/12/12 ZBA Decision Notice**
- c. **WINCOG Notices: Windham & Willington**
- d. **Notification of CLEAR Advanced Training**
- e. **Other**

11. Adjournment

DRAFT MINUTES
MANSFIELD PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, September 4, 2012
Council Chamber, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building

Members present: J. Goodwin (Chairman), B. Chandy, K. Holt, B. Pociask, K. Rawn, B. Ryan
Members absent: R. Hall, G. Lewis, P. Plante,
Alternates present: A. Marcellino, V. Ward, S. Westa
Staff Present: Linda Painter, Director of Planning and Development

Chairman Goodwin called the meeting to order at 7:12 p.m., appointing Ward and Westa to act in members' absence. Marcellino stated for the record he has been sworn in by the Town Clerk. He was asked to observe for his first meeting.

Minutes:

8-6-12 Joint Meeting Minutes- Ryan MOVED, Chandy seconded, to approve the 8/6/12 joint meeting minutes as written. MOTION PASSED with all in favor except Pociask who was disqualified. Westa noted for the record that she listened to the recording.

8-6-12 Regular Meeting Minutes- Ryan MOVED, Chandy seconded, to approve the 8/6/12 regular meeting minutes as written. MOTION PASSED with all in favor except Pociask who was disqualified. Westa noted for the record that she listened to the recording.

8-28-12 Field Trip Minutes- Ryan MOVED, Ward seconded, to approve the 8/28/12 field trip meeting minutes as written. MOTION PASSED with Goodwin, Chandy, Holt, Ryan, Ward and Westa in favor and all others disqualified.

Zoning Agent's Report: Noted.

Old Business:

- a. **Application to amend the Zoning Regulations, Article VII, Section S.2; Article VIII; and Article X, Section A.4.d- M. Healey-applicant, PZC File #1310**

Rawn MOVED, Holt seconded, to approve the application of Michael Healey, (File #1310), to amend Article VIII, Schedule of Dimensional Requirements and Article X, Section A.4.d to increase the maximum building height in the NB-1 and NB-2 zones from 30 feet to 35 feet and to allow the Commission to alter dimensional requirements related to building and site design through the site plan or special permit process as submitted to the Commission in a revised submission dated July 13, 2012, and heard at a Public Hearing on August 6, 2012. A copy of the subject regulation shall be attached to the Minutes of this meeting, and this amendment shall be effective as of October 1, 2012. Reasons for approval include:

1. The revision is considered acceptably worded and suitably coordinated with related zoning provisions.
2. The revisions are consistent with Plan of Conservation & Development goals and objectives and the provisions of Article I of the Zoning Regulations. The changes to maximum height and the granting of discretion to the Commission to determine appropriate dimensional requirements on a site-by-site basis will promote better architectural and site design in the NB-1, NB-2 and Design Development Districts.
3. The proposed change in maximum height for the NB-1 and NB-2 districts is consistent with the general height of existing buildings in the areas affected by the change.

4. The public hearing requirement for any dimensional adjustment made through the site plan approval or special permit approval process will ensure that potential land use impacts will be addressed.
MOTION PASSED with all in favor except Pociask who disqualified himself.

b. Subdivision Pre-Application: North Windham Road, PZC File #1311

Tabled pending committee reports.

New Business:

a. New Special Permit Application, 54 residential apartments, 73 Meadowbrook Lane, Whispering Glen-Lakeway Farms, L.P., owner/applicant: PZC File #1284-2

Chandy MOVED, Holt seconded, to receive the Special Permit application (File #1284-2), submitted by Lakeway Farms, L.P., for 54 residential apartments, on property located at 73 Meadowbrook Lane, as shown on plans dated 12-10-2011, and as shown and described in application submissions, and to refer said application to staff and committees for review and comments and to set a public hearing for 10-15-12.
MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

b. New Special Permit Application, Assembly-Banquet Hall, 476 Storrs Road, Healey, owner/applicant: PZC File #1312

Holt MOVED, Ryan seconded, to receive the Special Permit application (file #1312) submitted by Michael C. Healey, The Common Fields, for a Place of Assembly-Banquet Hall Use on property located at 476 Storrs Road as shown on plans dated 1-17-2012, as shown and described in application submissions, and to refer said application to staff and committees for review and comments and to set a Public Hearing for 10-1-12.
MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

c. Application to Amend the Mansfield Zoning Map/Storrs Center Master Plan, Storrs Center Alliance, LLC, owner/applicant: PZC File #1246-10

Holt MOVED, Ryan seconded, to receive the application submitted by Storrs Center Alliance (PZC File #1246-10), to amend the Zoning Map/ Master Plan for the Storrs Center Special Design District, owned by the applicant, located at Storrs Road and Post Office Road (northeast corner), in the SC-SDD (Storrs Center Special Design District), as shown on plans dated 08/29/2012 and as submitted to the Commission, to refer said application to the staff for review and comment and to set a Public Hearing for October 1, 2012.
MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

d. DAE Modification Request, Lot 5 Kidderbrook Estates, J. and C. Sweet, PZC File #1151-2

Joseph and Cara Sweet, were present and discussed the reasons why they are requesting a DAE modification. Holt MOVED, Ward seconded, that the Planning & Zoning Commission approve the modification request of Joseph and Cara Sweet, to revise the Development Area Envelope for Lot 5 of the Kidder Brook Estates Subdivision, as described in the 8/17/12 application, and shown on a plan dated, revised August 17, 2012. The proposed revision to the DAE will not affect neighboring properties, natural or manmade features or the overall character of the subdivision. This action shall be noticed on the land record. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

e. Modification Request: Staples Center, PZC File #483-4

Rawn MOVED, Holt seconded, that the 8-21-12 application for a two-way traffic pattern behind the Staples Center development be approved as requested and as depicted on a site plan dated 8/29/12. The staff has reviewed the request and has determined that two-way traffic can be accommodated safely provided that several existing parking spaces are removed from use. If it is determined by the Zoning Agent that the uses of the site require additional parking, there is adequate area for the construction of more parking. Any construction of additional parking shall require approval of the Planning & Zoning Commission.
MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

- f. **Request for Special Permit Extension, United Services, Inc., North Frontage Rd, PZC File #1302**
Pociask MOVED, Holt seconded, that the PZC approve a one-year extension until September 19, 2013, of the special permit granted to United Services, Inc., for the construction of an office building and associated site development on North Frontage Road. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.
- g. **Request for Determination of Efficiency Unit, 32 Fern Road, T. Cronin-owner**
An extensive discussion with the home owner, Tom Cronin, was followed by a motion: Holt MOVED, Ward seconded, that it is the determination of the Planning and Zoning Commission that the efficiency unit located at 32 Fern Road, was in existence prior to the enactment of the Zoning Regulations pertaining to efficiency units, and therefore is "grandfathered" and a legal unit. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.
- h. **Approval of Site Signage, Cumberland Farms, PZC File #1303-2**
Holt MOVED, Pociask seconded, that the PZC approve the Cumberland Farms proposed wall sign, a 24 square foot identity sign, conditional on the identity sign meeting the required setbacks as detailed in Article X, Section C.6.a and a 3' x 4' pricing sign. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.
- i. **Draft Connecticut Conservation and Development Policies Plan (2013-2018)**
Linda Painter, Director of Planning and Development, summarized her 8/20/12 report and reviewed the key components of the 2013-2018 Draft Connecticut Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) as it pertains to Mansfield. Painter noted that the POCD has been referred to several other Town Committees for comment and does not expect their reports until later in the month. The consensus of the Commission was to discuss this at the 10/1/12 meeting when all Committee reports are expected.
- j. **Consideration of Cancelling the 9/18/12 Meeting**
Pociask MOVED, Holt seconded, to cancel the September 18, 2012, meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Reports from Officers and Committees:

- A field trip was set for WEDNESDAY 9/12/12 at 3:30 p.m. with the wetlands item first and the remainder of the field trip dedicated to the special permit application on Meadowbrook Lane. It was agreed that future Field Trips will be held on the 2nd Wednesday of the month.
- The need for a regular "core group" of Regulatory Review Committee members was discussed, and Ward, Rawn, Holt and Marcellino agreed to regularly participate on this Committee. Thursdays at 5:00 p.m. was designated as the meeting time by consensus. Ward reiterated that all members are always welcome to attend. Painter will review the meeting schedule and communicate with members as necessary.
- Members were asked to recommend individuals who might be a good addition to the Design Review Panel since there is a vacancy due to the passing of Ms. Isabelle Atwood. Holt suggested staff contact Rudy Favretti to see if he might be interested in serving as a citizen member, knowledgeable in town history.
- Chandy agreed to take Rawn's seat on the Town Gown Committee to relieve Rawn's scheduling conflict.
- Staff agreed to confirm the number of PZC members required to sit on the Traffic Advisory Committee and report back at the next meeting.

Communications and Bills: None noted.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m. by the chairman.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine Holt, Secretary

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DRAFT MINUTES

MANSFIELD PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
INLAND WETLANDS AGENCY
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
FIELD TRIP

Special Meeting

Wednesday, September 12, 2012

Members present: J. Goodwin, K. Holt, A. Marcellino, B. Ryan, V. Ward
Others present: S. Lehman, Conservation Commission
Staff present: G. Meitzler, Wetlands Agent/Assistant Town Engineer
L. Painter, Director of Planning and Development

The field trip began at 3:30 p.m.

1. Block – 8-22 Hanks Hill Road – mobile home unit replacement, W1501
Members were met on site by home owner Michael Block. Members observed current conditions, and site characteristics. No decisions were made.
2. Whispering Glen- 73 Meadowbrook Lane- Special Permit Application- 54 Residential Apartments, PZC File #1284-2
Members observed current conditions, and site characteristics. No decisions were made.

The field trip ended at approximately 4:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

K. Holt, Secretary

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To: Town Council/Planning & Zoning Commission
 From: Curt Hirsch, Zoning Agent
 Date: August 30, 2012

Re: ***Monthly Report of Zoning Enforcement Activity***
For the month of July, 2012

Activity	This month	Last month	Same month last year	This fiscal year to date	Last fiscal year to date
Zoning Permits issued	13	14	14	13	14
Certificates of Compliance issued	7	4	12	7	12
Site inspections	28	41	44	28	44
Complaints received from the Public	5	8	0	5	0
Complaints requiring inspection	4	3	0	4	0
Potential/Actual violations found	3	3	0	3	0
Enforcement letters	13	6	7	13	7
Notices to issue ZBA forms	1	0	2	1	2
Notices of Zoning Violations issued	2	3	5	2	5
Zoning Citations issued	5	5	2	5	2

Zoning permits issued this month for single family homes = 0, 2-fm = 0, multi-fm = 0
 2012/2013 fiscal year total: s-fm = 0, 2-fm = 0, multi-fm = 0

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To: Town Council/Planning & Zoning Commission
From: Curt Hirsch, Zoning Agent
Date: September 26, 2012

Re: **Monthly Report of Zoning Enforcement Activity**
For the month of August, 2012

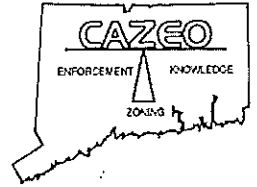
Activity	This month	Last month	Same month last year	This fiscal year to date	Last fiscal year to date
Zoning Permits issued	14	13	7	27	21
Certificates of Compliance issued	13	7	12	20	24
Site inspections	32	28	30	60	74
Complaints received from the Public	3	5	2	8	2
Complaints requiring inspection	2	4	2	6	2
Potential/Actual violations found	1	3	1	4	1
Enforcement letters	6	13	5	19	12
Notices to issue ZBA forms	1	1	0	2	2
Notices of Zoning Violations issued	2	2	2	4	7
Zoning Citations issued	0	5	2	5	4

Zoning permits issued this month for single family homes = 0, 2-fm = 0, multi-fm = 0
2012/2013 fiscal year total: s-fm = 0, 2-fm = 0, multi-fm = 0

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please ↴



Town of Mansfield



CURT B. HIRSCH
ZONING AGENT
HIRSCHCB@MANSFIELDCT.ORG

AUDREY P. BECK BUILDING
4 SOUTH EAGLEVILLE ROAD
MANSFIELD, CT 06268-2599
(860) 429-3341

Memo to: Planning and Zoning Commission
From: Curt Hirsch, Zoning Agent
Date: September 27, 2012

MONTHLY ACTIVITY for September, 2012

ZONING PERMITS

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Purpose</u>
Tolis	37 Hickory La.	above pool
Lanka	91 Pleasant Valley Rd.	rebuild house addition
Husky Pizza	9 Dog La.	identity signage
Mooyah's	1 Dog la.	identity signage
Windham Hospital Rehab.	1244 Storrs Rd.	identity signage
Kaufman	147 Birch Rd.	screen porch
Hoover	88 Cemetery Rd.	14 x 30 studio
Jahnke	12 Daleville Rd.	8 x 8 deck expansion

CERTIFICATES OF COMPLIANCE

Sweet Emotions	9 Dog La.	identity signage
Benson	110 Woods Rd.	shed
Natchaug Hospital	173 Storrs Rd.	warehouse & site work
Medbury	50 Beech Mtn. Rd.	ground solar array
Desrosiers	259 Stafford Rd.	shed
Adler	290 S. Eagleville Rd.	enlarge deck

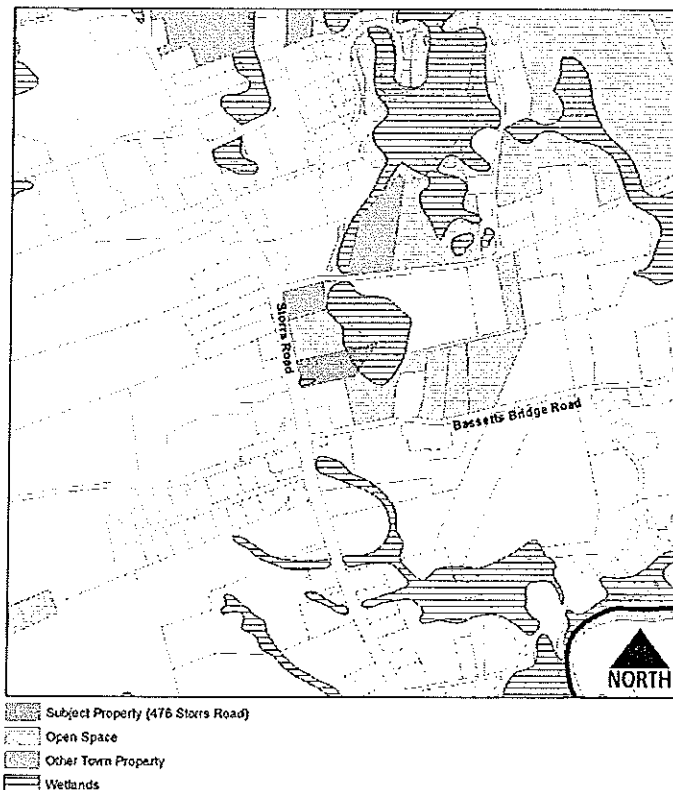
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TOWN OF MANSFIELD
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

LINDA M. PAINTER, AICP, DIRECTOR

Memo to: Planning and Zoning Commission
From: Linda M. Painter, AICP, Director of Planning and Development *LMP*
Date: September 27, 2012
Subject: The Common Fields
476 Storrs Road
Special Permit Application (File 1312)

Project Overview



Applicant: Michael C. Healey
Property Location: 476 Storrs Road
Zoning NB-2/Design Development District and RAR-90
Property Size: 2.6 acres
Project Description: The applicant is requesting Special Permit Approval to expand an existing barn for use as a Place of Assembly/Banquet Hall; allow for two apartments, one on the second floor of the existing farmhouse which is currently used for offices, and one on the second floor of the expanded barn; commercial recreation uses; live music and alcoholic beverage sales.

Project Overview

The property is currently developed with an 18th Century Farmhouse and Carriage House that are used for offices and a vacant barn that is in disrepair. The applicant is requesting special permit approval for the following activities¹:

¹ The Statement of Use submitted by the applicant included the request for the commercial recreation use, live music and requested confirmation that residential units would be allowed but did not specifically either use as a special permit request on the application form itself. The request for alcoholic beverage sales was not included in the statement of use but has been

- Expansion of the barn for use as a Place of Assembly/Banquet Hall (Article VII, Section S.2.h)
- Future conversion of the second floor of the farmhouse into a 2-bedroom apartment and development of a one bedroom apartment on the second floor of the barn addition. One to two residential units are allowed by special permit as part of a commercial building in combination with one or more of the uses permitted in the NB-2 zone (Article VII, Section S.2.f). To accommodate the future residential use in the existing farmhouse building, the applicant is also proposing a two-story addition on the north side of the building.
- Incidental use as a Commercial Recreation Center for exercise or dance classes, arts and crafts classes and similar uses (Article VII, Section S.2.d).
- Incidental Live Music associated with the place of assembly/commercial recreation use (Article VII, Section L.h)
- Sale of Alcoholic Beverages associated with the place of assembly use (Article VII, Section S.2.g)

The proposed assembly use will be the primary use of the barn with events mainly scheduled for Friday nights and weekends. Event capacity is estimated at 170 seats based on the floor plan submitted. Smaller events such as meetings, the commercial recreation use/classes noted above and event dinners may occur on other days of the week as well. Use of the facility Monday-Friday during daytime hours will be limited as parking is shared with the office uses on the property.

The proposed hours of operation for the assembly use are:

Friday evening: 6 pm to 12 am²

Saturday: 11 am to 12 am

Sunday: 11 am to 10 pm

It is anticipated that banquets, dinners, weddings and receptions may include the incidental use of live or recorded music. While there are currently no limitations on the use of recorded music, live music requires special permit approval. The applicant has noted that all music will be contained within the building, with the exception of 'soft ceremonial music' associated with a daytime outdoor wedding.

As part of the special permit approval, the applicant is also requesting approval of the following adjustments to dimensional requirements pursuant to Article X, Section A.4.d, as amended effective October 1, 2012:

- Article VII, Section A.2: Limits maximum size of buildings to 3,000 square feet. Existing buildings may be expanded beyond 3,000 square feet provided the expansion does not exceed 10% of the floor area of the building as it existed in 1996. The applicant is requesting a waiver of this limitation to allow an expansion of ±740 square feet, which is ±18.5% larger than the size of the barn in 1996 (4,000 square feet). It should also be noted that a ±725 square foot portion of the barn was removed in 2000; however, the regulation specifically references the size of the building in 1996, not the existing building.
- Article VIII, Schedule of Dimensional Requirements: The minimum required side yard setback for the NB-2 zone is 50 feet. The applicant is proposing the following setbacks along the north property line in lieu of the 50 feet required:
 - Addition to Existing Farmhouse: 41 feet
 - Addition to Barn: 22 feet
 - Relocation of 'Barn Annex' to serve as free-standing storage building: 4 feet

confirmed through conversations with the applicant. As special permit approval is required for all of these uses, staff recommends that the public hearing be continued and a revised public hearing notice be published in The Chronicle at the applicant's expense to include these uses in the overall application.

² Statement of use indicated 12 pm for both Friday and Saturday end times; staff assumed the 'pm' was a typo and that the applicant actually meant 12 am.

In addition to the modification to the side yard setback, the applicant is also proposing an addition to the farmhouse, which is non-conforming in terms of the front yard setback (required 60 foot, existing at 52 feet).

- Article VI, Section B.4.q.2: Requires a minimum 50 foot buffer adjacent to more restrictive zones. This requirement would need to be reduced along the northern property line, where the site abuts public open space in an RAR-90 zone. In addition to the buildings that would be located within the 50 foot area, the applicant has also proposed to extend the existing gravel parking lot and locate a service/delivery/trash area next to the barn addition.

Special Permit Approval Criteria

Article V, Section B(5) of the Mansfield Zoning Regulations requires that the proposed project meet the following criteria in order to be approved:

- *The proposed project will not detrimentally affect the public's health, safety and welfare.*
Subject to the suggested conditions noted under 'Summary and Recommendations,' the proposed project will not detrimentally affect the public's health, safety and welfare.
- *All approval criteria cited in Article V, Section A(5), Site Plan Approval Criteria, of the regulations have been met.*
See detailed discussion below regarding compliance with Zoning Regulations.
- *The proposed use is compatible with the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD).*
The property is classified as Neighborhood Business/Mixed Use on Map 22 of the POCD. The property is also located within the historic village of Mansfield Center. Policy Goal 2 encourages the conservation and preservation of Mansfield's natural, historic, agricultural and scenic resources with emphasis on protecting surface and groundwater quality, important greenways, agricultural and interior forest areas, undeveloped hilltops and ridges, scenic roadways and historic village areas. In accordance with this policy, the Commission adopted a specialized village design standards as recommended under Objective b. Consistency with these design standards is addressed below under compliance with Zoning Regulations.

The proposed use is consistent with the neighborhood business/mixed use designation, and will facilitate the preservation of the historic barn on the subject property. As such, the proposed use is consistent with the Plan of Conservation and Development.

- *The location and size of the proposed use and nature and intensity of use in relation to the size of the lot will be in harmony with the orderly development of the town and other existing uses.*
The property is located on the east side of Storrs Road (Route 195), just north of Bassetts Bridge Road in the historic village of Mansfield Center. As noted above, the proposed uses would facilitate the restoration of a historic barn, including reconstruction of the silo that was previously demolished. The site improvements have been designed to blend into the landscape as much as possible, through the use of brick pavers, gravel and lawn parking instead of asphalt paving. This approach reflects the fact that large assembly groups will be limited to Friday nights, Saturdays, and Sundays (limited to 1 event per day) and that the weekday use will be limited as parking is shared with the existing office uses. With appropriate restrictions, the proposed uses are compatible with surrounding development.
- *Proper consideration has been given to the aesthetic quality of the proposal, including the architectural design, landscaping and proper use of the site's natural features. The kind, size, location and height of structures, the nature and extent of site work, and the nature and intensity of the use shall not hinder or discourage use of the neighboring properties or diminish the value thereof. All applicable standards contained in Article X, Section R shall be incorporated into the plans.*
See detailed discussion below regarding compliance with Zoning Regulations.

Compliance with Zoning Regulations

The following analysis is organized by five main types of regulations: Use, Design, Environmental, Site Access and Site Development/Performance Standards.

- **Use.** As noted on page 1, the subject property is located in two zones, the Neighborhood Business -2 Zone, which is one of several Design Development Districts, and the RAR-90 zone. The zone boundary appears to be very close to the back edge of the existing barn. Pursuant to Article III, Section D: *"Where any established or proposed lot falls into two or more zoning districts or two or more municipalities, any questions of uncertainty as to district boundaries, permitted uses, setbacks and other regulatory requirements shall be determined by the Mansfield Planning and Zoning Commission, after taking into account the portion of the lot within each zone or municipality."* Given that the zone line does not follow the property line (which extends into the pond), the Commission needs to specifically approve the extension of the assembly and commercial recreation uses into the RAR-90 zone, due to the location of gazebo and deck extending off the rear of the barn. Given that there is an existing public use easement that has been granted by the applicant on the west side of the pond, it would be appropriate to approve the use of the property up to the easement boundary for the assembly use.
 - *Residential Units.* With regard to the addition of two residential units, one in the existing farmhouse/office building and one in the barn/assembly space, this type of mixed use may be allowed through special permit approval. While the applicant has noted that he intends the 'apartment' in the barn to be used primarily as a guest suite for people associated with an event held at the venue, it's design includes a kitchenette and therefore should be considered a dwelling unit.
 - *Live/Pre-Recorded Music.* Pursuant to Article VII, Section L.h, the following requirements apply to live music special permits: no outdoor speakers may be used and the music played shall not be 'objectionable at the site's property lines.' For clarity in enforcement, objectionable should be deemed to be any noise that exceeds the maximum thresholds established in the Town's noise ordinance. Given the location of the building adjacent to a pond, the applicant should also be required to ensure that doors and windows to remain closed at all times during an event to prevent amplified music from spreading outdoors.
 - *Alcoholic Beverage Sales/Temporary Special Outing Facility Permits.* Article X, Section I contains the regulations for alcoholic beverage sales, including temporary special outing permits. The applicant needs to submit detailed plans for parking, traffic control, crowd control, and protection of minors in addition to the operating hours already submitted. This information is needed for review and approval by the Mansfield Police Department prior to closure of the public hearing. With regard to approval by the Mansfield Health Officer, the sanitarian from Eastern Highlands Health District has noted that the septic system design has been submitted for review, and while no approval has been granted at this time, he doesn't anticipate that any corrections will significantly affect the plans submitted to the PZC. The final approval should be obtained by the applicant prior to closure of the public hearing and should also specifically note that the Health Officer is aware of the plan to sell alcoholic beverages.
- **Design Regulations.** Due to the property's location in the Mansfield Center historic village, development of the site is subject to two sets of design regulations: Article X, Section J – Special Provisions in Historic Village Areas and Article X, Section R – Architectural and Design Standards. The intent and provisions of the two sections are very similar, with varying levels of specificity for different requirements. The following analysis summarizes areas where the proposed design could be improved to better comply with the various design regulations. The Design Review Panel did review this project and did not have any significant concerns.

- **Special Provisions for Plan of Conservation and Development designated Historic Village Areas**
Although the property is not within the Mansfield Center historic district, it is located within the historic village area as identified in the Plan of Conservation and Development. In 2011, the PZC adopted design standards specific to historic village areas (Article X, Section J). These standards address design of buildings in relation to other buildings in the district particularly with regards to scale, materials, spacing and architectural form. As noted previously, the existing barn is being expanded by approximately 18% from its size in 1996. Based on the information submitted, the additions to the barn and the farmhouse have been designed to complement the overall site and historic nature of the village. However, at this point the elevations are very schematic in nature. Therefore, if the application is ultimately approved, more detailed elevation drawings with specific colors, materials, etc. should be submitted for approval by the Planning Director with guidance as needed from the Design Review Panel prior to issuance of zoning permits for expansions of either structure.
- **Architectural and Design Standards (Article X, Section R)**
The following analysis is limited to those standards/criteria that have not already been addressed by the Historic Village criteria.
 - *Site Layout Standards.* The proposed project is intended to facilitate the restoration of the historic barn on the site, thereby meeting the objective of protecting and enhancing the historic and scenic nature of the site. The additions to the barn are varied and are placed on all sides of the structure, thereby reducing the overall appearance of its mass in comparison to surrounding buildings, and avoiding what could have appeared to be a large, monolithic structure. While the northern expansion is approximately 7 feet closer to the property line than the existing structure (before the silo was demolished), this additional encroachment will not have a significant impact on the adjacent open space. The applicant is proposing to relocate an existing annex attached to the rear of the existing barn for use as a storage shed. This structure would be located 4 feet from the northern property line. While it close to the adjacent open space, it would serve as a visual buffer for the dumpster and recycling area, both from the adjacent open space and from Storrs Road. The garbage facilities should also be screened by a fence in keeping with the agricultural character of the property.
 - *Signs and Lighting.* Design of signage, lighting fixtures, storage enclosures, etc. is required to be coordinated with the primary buildings in form, materials and details. No sign details have been submitted at this time; approval of signs could be completed administratively by the Planning Director in conjunction with the Chair. The applicant has submitted a proposed lighting fixture that is consistent with the rustic character of the site. However, additional details should be provided to ensure that the fixture includes a full shield cutoff to minimize light pollution and to ensure the type of light meets the requirements of Section X.R.4.e. The current fixture appears to direct light outward instead of down. Additionally, the image of the gazebo submitted includes a light fixture in the cupola; given its location adjacent to the pond, the cupola should not be lit. Any lighting within the structure should be designed to minimize light spill beyond the structure by being fully shielded by the gazebo roof.
 - *Landscaping.* Site improvements have been designed to reduce the visual impact of the additional parking and vehicular access needed for the proposed use. All new driveways and parking will either be gravel, permeable brick pavers or lawn parking. The applicant has used raised curb edges in several locations to define the driving aisle. Use of flush curbs or curb breaks in these areas might be more appropriate and could potentially facilitate additional stormwater infiltration during large rain events while still providing clear direction as to where parking on the grass is expected. The landscape plan should also be amended to include the entire site, and add plantings along the northern property line to screen and buffer the parking and trash areas from

the adjacent open space. The final plan set should include the details on number, type and size of plants on the plan sheet itself instead of on a separate document as currently presented.

○ **Environmental (Water, Wastewater, Flood Control, Etc.).**

The following information has been provided by the applicant relative to infrastructure needed to support the development:

- **Water.** The use has been classified as a 'Transient Non-Community Public Water Supply System' by the Department of Public Health and the applicant has submitted a Phase IA application to determine suitability of the existing well. If the use is approved, it should be contingent upon the applicant receiving approval from the DPH for use of the existing well in the quantities needed to support all of the uses proposed for the site. The report prepared by Faist Engineering does not reference the two proposed residential units. The applicant should ensure that the DPH application includes full potential use of the site, including both dwelling units.

Wastewater. The Eastern Highlands Health District is in the process of reviewing the proposed plans and per the email from Geoffrey Havens, does not anticipate any insurmountable problems with the septic design. The applicant has also submitted a report from Faist Engineering pursuant to the aquifer protection requirements contained in Article VI, Section B.4.m. This report indicates that the on-site septic system could have long-term impacts if not properly inspected, operated and maintained. As such, on-going maintenance should be a condition of approval to prevent future impacts to the aquifer and nutrient loading into the pond.

- **Stormwater.** The stormwater system design was reviewed by the Inland Wetlands Agency as part of a previous application. Similar to the comments provided by Faist Engineering on the ongoing maintenance of the septic system, continued operation and maintenance of the stormwater drainage system and dumpster area will be required to prevent future impacts to the aquifer.

Additionally, the stormwater design should be updated to include Low Impact Development techniques identified in the 2011 Appendix to the Connecticut Stormwater Quality Manual with the goal of disconnecting impervious surfaces and maintaining predevelopment hydrology to the maximum extent practicable. Examples include use of rain gardens instead of tying roof leader drains into the piped drainage system or dry wells.

○ **Site Access (Vehicular, Pedestrian, Parking, Loading, etc.)**

Access to the site will be from the existing driveway onto Storrs Road. The Traffic Authority has also recommended installation of a temporary "caution" sign on Bassets Bridge Road on event days to alert motorists to additional traffic entering the road from the access drive.

- **Parking.** The applicant has proposed a mix of paved, gravel and lawn parking to support the use. As some of the spaces shown do not meet dimensional requirements, the current plan appears to accommodate 48 vehicles (assuming two spaces in the loading/delivery area adjacent to the dumpster and 2 handicap accessible spaces). Additionally, the applicant has obtained approval from the Town Council to license a small portion of the adjacent property to the south for occasional overflow parking. This area could accommodate approximately 15 vehicles (self-parked) or potentially more if valet parking is used. This would result in 63 total available spaces. Assuming two passengers per vehicle, this could accommodate events of approximately 120 people. Larger events would require additional off-site parking and shuttling.

The license for the occasional overflow parking area has not yet been finalized as the license agreement will include conditions as to the use and maintenance of the overflow parking area imposed by the Commission as part of any special permit approval for the assembly use. The

applicant has indicated verbally that he would like to use the overflow area for employee parking at each event. Given the intent to use the area for occasional parking, the applicant should submit a detailed parking plan that identifies how often the overflow area is anticipated to be needed, how parking for larger events will be handled, how traffic and parking in the overflow area will be managed, what other options will be used for parking prior to use of the overflow area, and how the area will be maintained, including erosion controls and measures to minimize potential impacts from minor leaks from vehicles. This parking plan should clearly indicate that all vehicular access to the overflow lot will be from the site; only egress to Bassetts Bridge will be permitted. Furthermore, public access to the gravel path and pond must be maintained at all times.

- *Fire Access.* While the proposed plan indicates the size of the assembly space as 4,740 square feet, the Fire Marshal has noted that if the building changes in size and exceeds 5,000 square feet, fire lanes around the perimeter will be required if the building is not sprinkled. Additionally, details for the 'optional' gate must be provided prior to installation.

- **Site Development/Performance Standards**

- *Maximum Building Size.* The proposed barn addition represents an expansion of $\pm 18\%$ from the size of the barn in 1996. While this exceeds the 10% maximum established in Article VII, Section S.2, the addition has been broken up into different areas to reduce the overall appearance of the structure massing. Given the size of the existing barn, the proposed additions are compatible in scale.
- *Setbacks.* As noted previously, the applicant is requesting adjustments to the minimum required front yard setback for an addition to the farmhouse and to the minimum required side yard setback along the north property line for the farmhouse and barn additions and for relocation of the 'barn annex' for use as a storage shed. The additions to the barn and farmhouse are over 20 feet from the property line, and are not expected to have significant impact on the adjacent public open space. The storage building would be located approximately 4 feet from the property line. While it will screen the parking and refuse area from Storrs Road and the adjacent open space, it would be much closer to the property line than a typical 200 square foot shed, which is required to be 10 feet from the property line. The proposed storage building is approximately 228 square feet.
- *Landscaping/Buffering.* Article VI, Section B.4.q.2 requires a 50 foot landscape buffer adjacent to more restrictive zones. This would apply along the north property line and along the zone line that bisects the property unless reduced by the Commission. If the Commission determines that the use and the setbacks proposed by the applicant are appropriate, a reduction to this requirement would also be in order. As noted previously, additional landscaping should be added to better screen the parking and service areas from the adjacent public open space to the north.

Summary and Recommendations

Based on the above analysis, additional information is needed from the applicant. As such, the public hearing on this item should be continued until those issues have been addressed.

NOTES

- The analysis and recommendations contained in this report are based on the following information submitted by the applicant:
 - Application submitted August 30, 2012 and received by the PZC on September 4, 2012, including:
 - Statement of Use
 - Sanitation Report prepared by Faist Engineering, and dated August 31, 2012
 - Site Drainage Report prepared by Faist Engineering and dated March 5, 2012
 - Plant specifications prepared by Rudy Favretti
 - Photograph of proposed gazebo
 - Light specifications for freestanding poles
 - 14-page plan set prepared by Land Consulting Services including existing conditions survey, site plan, grading, septic system, landscaping, building elevations and floor plans dated 1/17/2012 and revised through 9/25/2012
 - Elevations of farmhouse addition and structural drawings of barn submitted September 26, 2012
- The following correspondence regarding the proposed development has been received:
 - Memo from Assistant Town Engineer dated September 26, 2012
 - Email from Geoffrey Havens, Eastern Highlands Health District dated September 26, 2012
 - Memo from Francis Raiola, Deputy Fire Marshal, dated September 25, 2012
 - Letter from Bill Petix, 4 Echo Road, dated October 1, 2012
- Neighborhood Notification Forms were sent to property owners within 500 feet of the subject property in accordance with Article V, Section B(3)(c) of the Mansfield Zoning Regulations on September 20, 2012. A copy of the notice and certified mail receipts have been provided to the Department of Planning and Development.
- Before rendering a decision, the Planning and Zoning Commission must consider other referral reports and public hearing testimony. A decision must be made within 65 days of the close of the Public Hearing unless the applicant grants a written extension.
- The Public Hearing on this item will be opened on October 1, 2012.

Memorandum:

September 26, 2012

To: Planning & Zoning Commission
From: Grant Meitzler, Assistant Town Engineer
Re: Healey - 476 Storrs Rd - barn renovation

plan reference: dated 1.17.2012, revised 9.25.2012

This application is for barn renovation and site work to create a meeting, wedding and banquet facility.

Parking

By my count:

44 spaces on site
4 handicapped spaces on site
15 offsite spillover

73 spaces (+ sharing)

There is space for more than 15 cars spillover parking. Parking is a mix between paved, lawn and grass surfaces on the site. The plan shows a single row of 15 spillover spaces on adjacent town land. The dimensions will allow a few more spaces getting very close to a figure of 2 people per car which indicates 85 spaces for the stated capacity of 170 total occupancy.

There is a sharing that will occur since the businesses in the house are weekday operations that will allow sharing the front parking areas for weekend events.

Regarding the content of the "spillover" parking easement on adjacent town property I recommend including use of gravel roadway to Bassetts Bridge Rd in the easement, and use of a temporary CAUTION sign for special events - to be placed on the shoulder opposite the Bassetts Bridge roadway exit. It is my understanding entry will be from Rte 195 but exit from this rear drive seems inevitable. Sight distances are excellent in each direction but exiting traffic may not otherwise be expected. (450 to 195 intersection, >700 feet looking toward the dam).

This section of Rte 195 has traffic light control at Rte 89 and at Bassetts Bridge Rd that will establish intermittent gaps. This should be more effective for entry at the Rte 195 drive. Exiting traffic will probably find the Bassetts Bridge route leading to the traffic light easier to use.

I think the special event nature of this use reduces potential for adverse conditions for traffic travelling to and from the site.

Drainage considerations were part of the earlier wetlands approval for this project. The Conservation had raised wetlands issues out of concern for nutrient levels impact on the bog. The plans included improvements for the ConnDOT drain, adjacent parking lot runoff and for retention and sediment collection before flows reach the bog at the rear of the property. Much of the site has been provided with sheet flow runoff leaving surfaces located well away from the edge of wetlands.

There is an apartment addition to the existing house (now offices) that is indicated as a future addition. My understanding is that this is related to the barn renovations in providing a spot for overnight guests to stay, or to provide a more private area.



TOWN OF MANSFIELD

Mansfield Fire Department



JOHN JACKMAN, DEPUTY CHIEF / FIRE MARSHAL
FRAN RAIOLA, ASST. CHIEF / DEPUTY FIRE MARSHAL

AUDREY P. BECK BUILDING
4 SOUTH EAGLEVILLE ROAD
MANSFIELD, CT 06268-2599
TELEPHONE (860) 429-3328
FACSIMILE (860) 429-3388

To: Planning and Zoning Commission

From: Fran Raiola, Assistant Chief/Deputy Fire Marshal *FR*

Date: September 25, 2012

Re: Common Fields – 476 Storrs Road

PZC file #1312

After reviewing the plans for the above referenced project for compliance with the requirements of the Town of Mansfield Regulations for Fire Lanes, and Emergency Vehicle Access, I have the following comments.

1. The plans indicate an "optional gate", additional details must be submitted if the gate does get installed.
2. Current plans estimate the square footage to be at 4460. Any building that does not have a fire sprinkler system and is greater than 5,000 square feet is required to have fire lane access around the entire perimeter. §125-5 B
3. All fire lanes are required to have a minimum inside turning radius of 25 feet. § 125-6 B
4. The applicant is required to submit plans and specifications to the Building Department and the Office of the Fire Marshal, prior to a Building Permit from the Building Department being issued. The plans and specifications must be in substantial compliance with The Connecticut Building Code, The Connecticut Fire Safety Code and The Connecticut State Fire Prevention Code prior to the commencement of work.

PAGE
BREAK

From: Bill Petix, 4 Echo Road, Mansfield Center, Ct. 860-456-0791;
kirpalct@yahoo.com
To: Town of Mansfield, Planning and Zoning Commission
Date: October 1, 2012
Subject: Request for Special Permit for The Common Fields, 476 Storrs
Road

The current proposal for a special permit is the third request in my memory that a developer has made to seek permission to alter the special character of Mansfield Center. The Planning and Zoning Commission wisely rejected the two previous proposals, and hopefully the Commission will similarly reject this current intrusive proposal.

The first rejection was of the proposal submitted in 1988 known as "The Farms" which sought to build condominiums and office spaces on the Eaton Farms property.

A group of concerned citizens organized themselves as the Mansfield Community Group and protested the proposal. In 1989 the project was rejected by the Planning and Zoning Commission of the Town of Mansfield.

"Farms II" was proposed in 1990, and citizens contested the plan mainly on the basis of ecological concerns regarding the bog, the aquifer, and the old cemetery, quality of life issues, and questions regarding how the development of Mansfield Center fit in to the Town's larger plan.

In rejecting the Farms II proposal the Commission reasoned that the project, "threatened the historic significance of the village center, did not promote the general welfare of the town, nor was it in harmony with the town's plan of development."

The developer appealed the Planning and Zoning Commission's ruling to Rockville Superior Court, and the Court upheld the Commission's ruling in April of 1993.

The current proposal seeks special permission to use the barn located at 476 Storrs Road as a "place of assembly-banquet hall, with focus on special events such as weddings, receptions, special dinners and banquets." These events may include "live or DJ music lasting to midnight on Friday and

Saturday evenings and till 10 pm on Sunday.” It will also include the playing of outside daytime music.

The developers also want permission to use Town owned lands for parking: “Onsite parking is limited to approximately 55 spaces. Additional offsite parking may be required. The applicant seeks the approval to utilize the adjacent Town owned lands for overflow parking.”

This is alarming. How many participants are expected to use the facility at the same time if onsite parking of fifty-five spaces is not enough, and the applicant wants to use Town land for the overflow?

What the effect will be on the delicate ecological system of so many people using the banquet hall at the same time is a matter for others to examine.

My remarks will primarily address the non-ecological impact this proposal will have on the community.

In rejecting the application in 1989 the Commission wrote; “The proposed development does not reinforce the historical significance of the area or the present mixed uses in the neighborhood. Evidence was presented about the historical significance of the area, which is located between two historic districts and next to a valuable historical cemetery.”

The same reasoning applies to the current application. The use of Mansfield Center property for late night partying, including loud music and alcohol consumption does not reinforce the historical significance of the area, nor is it consistent with the present mixed uses in the neighborhood.

In its rejection of The Farms proposal the Commission wrote: “This particular proposal does not promote the overall health, safety and welfare of the residents of Mansfield and the general public.”

The same could be said of this current proposal.

This proposal is contrary to the zoning regulations of the Town of Mansfield:

The Zoning Regulations were revised in July of 2011. It states “no land use shall transmit beyond its subject property lines any noise which is objectionable due to volume, intermittence, beat frequency, shrillness or intensity.”

One of the stated purposes of the zoning regulations is to “protect the character and maintain the stability and property values of residential, business and industrial areas within the Town, including areas and properties of historic value.”

Another purpose of the regulations is to “encourage the use of aesthetic considerations in designing buildings and site improvements, thereby promoting attractive projects that are compatible with the character of the site and subject neighborhood, and promote the value of properties in the neighborhood and the Town.”

The conversion of the Eaton Barn into a wedding facility is hardly an attractive project that is compatible with the character of the site and subject neighborhood. Loud music and groups of revelers smoking and drinking alcohol outside the barn late at night certainly doesn't promote the value of properties in the neighborhood, nor does it protect properties of historic value contained in Mansfield Center.

It should be understood by the Commission that the nearby Echo Lake and Echo Road are not named “echo” by accident. Sound travels through the fields and valley of Mansfield Center in a dramatic fashion. At my home on Echo Road, I can hear bands playing at Recreation Park, in Willimantic. Live music played at Mansfield Hollow Park can be heard clearly, as well as loud sounds traveling north from Route 195.

While the music heard from Rec. Park and Mansfield Hollow are very infrequent, maybe once a year at most, it does demonstrate the fact that sounds travel amazingly well in this area.

There is no question that music from the proposed banquet hall will disturb the neighbors. There is no question that if this special permit is granted, the value of properties in the neighborhood will decline drastically.

Another purpose of the zoning regulations is to encourage compatible and appropriate use of land within the various zones and throughout the town.

The site adjacent to the proposed banquet hall is currently occupied by a law office, mediation center, insurance agency, physician and therapists. Near by is a small restaurant, T & B Motors, a liquor store and marine supply store - all non-intrusive, self-contained, quiet businesses.

A banquet hall catering to party goers and late night festivities is hardly compatible with the existing use of the land.

Another purpose of the regulations is to protect residents from nuisances from sight/or sound.

As mentioned above, music and outside congregating, especially late at night, will certainly result in nuisance sounds disturbing the residents and the tranquil nature of Mansfield Center.

In the Special Permit Requirements document it states, "In all special permit applications, the burden rests with the applicant to demonstrate to the Commission that the subject proposal will not detrimentally affect the public's health, welfare and safety and that the following approval criteria have been met."

Section c. of the approval criteria states; "The location and size of the proposed use and the nature and intensity of use in relation to the size of the lot will be in harmony with the orderly development of the Town and compatible with other existing uses."

The nature of the proposed use - late night partying - and the intensity of the activities taking place - drinking, large numbers of people congregating about - is not in harmony with the orderly development of the Town and is not compatible with other existing uses.

Also, section d. of the Special Permit Requirements states, “the nature and intensity of the use, shall not hinder or discourage the use of neighboring properties or diminish the value thereof.”

This requirement alone warrants the Commission’s rejection for a special permit.

A live band playing music outside, late night sounds from a live band or DJ blasting music from the barn, as well as all the other infringements this proposal would entail, certainly hinders neighbors from using their property and homes for previously peaceful and relaxing activities, not to mention sleep.

Mansfield has been working hard to preserve its quiet character for quite some time. A 1998 noise ordinance states:

“The ordinance would address noisy cars, blaring radios, stereos, amplifiers and any musical instrument played in such a manner or with such volume so as to annoy persons in the vicinity.”

In addition to the unquestionable deterioration of the quality of life for residents of Mansfield Center, the proposal would violate a 2011 “Ordinance to Prevent Neighborhood Nuisances”.

The following is an excerpt from this ordinance.

“It is found by the Town Council of the Town of Mansfield that a significant number of persons in the town occasionally engage in behavior which constitutes a nuisance. Nuisance behavior includes, but is not limited to, disturbances of the peace, disorderly conduct, underage drinking, obstruction of public streets by crowds or vehicles, crimes against property and excessive noise, separately or sometimes in combination.

Nuisance conduct has a negative effect upon residents and occupants of adjacent homes and structures, impacts the quality of life of neighborhoods, and tends to depress the value of nearby property.”

According to the ordinance, Mansfield's amended definition of a "nuisance" is:

"Any behavior which substantially interferes with the comfort or safety of other residents or occupants of the same or nearby buildings or structures. Conduct of a person or persons on any premises... which creates a disturbance of the quiet enjoyment of private or public property may constitute a nuisance...Such behavior includes... excessive noise."

For the Planning and Zoning Commission to sanction the very behavior the town is trying to suppress, by approving this special permit, is clearly not in the best interest of the Town or its citizens.

We have all been to numerous weddings and we know that such occasions do not lend themselves to the maintenance of a peaceful and quiet environment. We know from our own experience that such facilities are not appropriate in a residential area.

The last wedding I attended was a year ago for a niece that took place in a fancy banquet hall in Branford. The bride and groom are in their twenties, and are mature, well behaved professionals. As the evening progressed, and fueled by alcohol, a date of one of the guests thought it would be a good idea to imitate Tom Cruise's character from the movie Risky Business. He proceeded to shed his shoes and pants and slide on to the dance floor in his underwear, copying Cruise's character playing an air guitar.

The groom did not appreciate the performance and a fight ensued. Four police cars arrived to quell the disturbance that spilled out into the parking lot.

Such is the occasional behavior when young people celebrate a joyous occasion and alcohol inhibits otherwise rational behavior.

Mansfield Center certainly doesn't benefit by providing a venue for such activities.

This particular proposal would result in large numbers of revelers drinking and listening to loud music and congregating outside the building for smoking, talking, etc.

The close proximity of the old revolutionary era cemetery would most likely provide an ideal excursion for party goers looking for fresh air, a nighttime walk, and seclusion. Given what we know of such late night mind altered wanderings, these are not the visitors the town's historic cemetery need invite.

Increased traffic and increased incidents of intoxicated drivers taking to the roads are two more negative consequences if this proposal gains approval.

The Town of Mansfield and its police force have its hands full dealing with the current problem of young people partying and disturbing the peace. The last thing the Town needs is more opportunities to invite large numbers of party-goers into its midst for late night festivities.

In rendering their rejection of previous attempts to negatively impact the nature of Mansfield Center, the previous Planning and Zoning Commission members recognized that Mansfield Center is the historic heart of the town, that it contains the greatest quantity and the highest quality of historic landmarks. In rejecting the application, the members understood that Mansfield Center's unique characteristics must be preserved. They understood that the distinctive features of Mansfield Center deserve the highest degree of protection from commercial development.

In upholding the Town's rejection of the two previous attempts to alter the status quo in Mansfield Center the Rockville District Court in 1993 provided valuable advice to the current Board in its deliberations regarding the current application. **The Superior Court judge wrote, "The whole purpose of a special exception use is to determine on a case by case basis whether or not a proposed use of land is appropriate in a given location even if it does in fact meet all of the so-called mechanical or specific standards of the regulations."**

Clearly, the operation of a wedding/banquet facility in the heart of Mansfield Center, surrounded by residential homes, is not an appropriate use of land regardless of whether or not the applicant meets the standards of the regulations.

The fact that the Eaton land was acquired by the town and remains undeveloped, and the recent enactment of nuisance and noise ordinances, indicates a determination to maintain the rural, tranquil nature of Mansfield, particularly Mansfield Center. This trend to maintain open space and a peaceful atmosphere will hopefully be continued by the thoughtful decision of this Board to protect the Center from unwanted and unbeneficial development.

Before I close I like to read a portion of a letter Hugh Hamill wrote in 1997 to the Mansfield Town Council. Hugh Hamill was a historian, president of Joshua's Trust and a tireless crusader against unreasonable development in Mansfield Center. Hugh died a few years ago.

"In 1988 an epic struggle over the future of these twenty-one acres began that was to run for nearly five years... The plans for "The Farm", as the development was absurdly called, provoked massive protest by members of this community. Thousands of volunteer hours and thousands of dollars were spent to save "The Farm" for open space. In the end, the defenders of the land prevailed. In due course, the land was acquired by the Town on the recommendation of the Open Space Committee.

In the course of the testimony it was proposed that this was hallowed land. It was suggested that Col. Experience Storrs, owner of the house on Storrs Road, drilled Mansfield's volunteers in 1775 for another kind of struggle on this space, perhaps between the house and the ancient cemetery, which is on the National Registry. From an ecological perspective it was maintained that both the fragile bog and the precious aquifer might be injured by development.

When the Town bought the land, everyone who had worked to save the vistas cheered. Now there is concern again...The aggregate of the proposed uses might well damage the Eaton Land irreversibly. Several of the proposals would lead to asphalt parking lots, signs, and semi-permanent structures, including toilets.

I would propose that the land be left alone. I have a dream that the farm house, barn and sheds will be restored to active farm use. Then the fields would be returned to agricultural use. What a magnificent sight that would be as the showpiece of Mansfield Center! Maybe that dream will come true. Let us hope. In the meantime – while we wait and work – nothing should be done that would impede that eventuality.”

Hugh Hamill’s dream of restoring the property to active farm use may not be realized in the near future, but using this “hallowed land” for a peace shattering, revelous party site would surely distress Hugh and the many other citizens who care so deeply about the welfare and destiny of this special location.

This proposal was so obviously wrong for so many reasons, I tried to think of what justification the applicant would use to make this project seem attractive and worthy of a special permit. A few obvious ones are:

- * The renovation will produce a beautiful building that will adorn a beautifully designed site. The Taj Mahal is a beautiful building and it is not appropriate in Mansfield Center.
- * It will benefit the town financially. The Town has repeatedly not been swayed by financial gain when it came to developing Mansfield Center. The same argument was used in trying to promote the Farms development and was not persuasive. In this cast, the costs far exceed the gain.
- * It will fulfill a need or provide a beneficial service. No it won’t. According to a CT Wedding/Banquet Venues website (the knot) there are two existing wedding/banquet sites in Mansfield, two in Norwich, one in Bolton and many more throughout the area.

* It will provide a local destination for public relaxation and social gathering. Not needed – plenty already exist.

* It's not going to disturb the neighbors or devalue home prices. No matter what the developer says, don't believe it. Both will happen – the neighbors will be extremely disturbed (wouldn't you) and home values will decrease.

* It won't have a negative ecological impact. Don't believe it. The same was said in the Farms proposal, and despite the developer's evidence to the contrary, the Inland Wetland Agency denied the proposal because of the potential impact on the bog.

In conclusion, I would suggest to the Commission that the reasons for rejecting this application for a special permit are similar to the reasons used in the past. In this case, as in previous proposals, "this particular proposal does not promote the overall health, safety and welfare of the residents of Mansfield and the general public."

I urge this committee to do the right thing and protect the community and its residents from this ill-advised proposal. If you do protect Mansfield Center from this intrusion the residents will applaud you, the police will applaud you, future generations will applaud you, and all lovers of Mansfield and what is good for Mansfield will applaud you.

When making your decision on this very important issue, I hope you remember what the Rockville Superior Court judge wrote:

"The whole purpose of a special exception use is to determine on a case by case basis whether or not a proposed use of land is appropriate in a given location even if it does in fact meet all of the so-called mechanical or specific standards of the regulations."

TOWN OF MANSFIELD
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

LINDA M. PAINTER, AICP, DIRECTOR

Memo to: Planning and Zoning Commission
From: Linda M. Painter, AICP, Director of Planning and Development
Date: September 27, 2012
Subject: Storrs Center Special Design District Map Amendment
File #1246-10



Project Background

June 2007 **Establishment of Storrs Center Special Design District (SC-SDD)** the Planning and Zoning Commission approved the rezoning of approximately 47 acres of property generally located on the east side of Storrs Road (Route 195) between Post Office Road and Dog Lane from PO-1, PB-2 and RAR-90 to SC-SDD. The zoning map for the SC-SDD includes the overall master plan for development of the property.

February 2011 **Phase IA/IB Zoning Permit.** The Director of Planning authorized the issuance of a Zoning Permit for Phases IA and IB.

May 2011 **Parking Garage Zoning Permit.** The Director of Planning authorized the issuance of a Zoning Permit for the Parking Garage and Intermodal Center.

August 2011 **Post Office Zoning Permit.** The Director of Planning and Development authorized the issuance of a Zoning Permit for the site improvements to the Post Office.

April 2012 **Village Street Zoning Permit.** The Director of Planning and Development authorized the issuance of a Zoning Permit for the Village Street.

Overview of Proposed Map Amendment

The applicant is requesting approval of an amendment to the Storrs Center Special Design District Zoning Map to add an alternate development concept for the Phase 4 area of the project, commonly referred to as Market Square. As originally proposed, Phase 4 consisted of four mixed use buildings with approximately 47,530 square feet of commercial space, 32,437 square feet of office space, 117 residential units, and a subsurface parking garage. Access to the property was provided from Storrs Road and the Village Street, with a pair of one-way streets located on either side of 'Market Square,' a small green located across from the parking lot located immediately north of Town Hall.

The proposed alternative concept would include a ±31,500 square foot market (grocery store) and a ±5,000 square foot commercial building at the corner of Storrs Road and Post Office Road. The underground structured parking has been removed and replaced with a surface parking lot that will be accessed via Storrs Road and Post Office Road. The Storrs Road driveway will allow full entry from northbound and southbound traffic, but egress will be limited to right-turns out headed northbound. The new design retains a strong pedestrian connection between Town Hall, across Storrs Road to the Village Street along the front of the grocery store and incorporates a sidewalk café to enliven the space; however, the Market Square "green" would be eliminated.

The applicant, Storrs Center Alliance, is requesting that this new concept be approved as a possible alternative to the original design for Phase 4. If approved, they would have the ability to proceed with either concept.

Analysis of Request

Pursuant to Article X, Section S.1, "...the preliminary master plan approved as part of the map amendment shall become part of the zoning for the land included within the map amendment." As such, any substantial change to the preliminary master plan requires a zoning map amendment. Article XIII, Section D identifies the following approval considerations for any petition to amend the Zoning Map.

The proposal is complete and contains all required application information.

The applicant has submitted the required application form, Statement of Justification, and the following documents (dated 8/29/2012) related to the proposed alternative design concept for the Market Square area:

- Amended/Alternate Preliminary Master Plan Map Sheets:
 - Existing Zoning, Sheet ZC.02.a
 - Property Owners Map, Sheet ZC.03.a
 - Preliminary Master Plan, Sheet ZC.05.a
 - Preliminary Grading and Stormwater Management Plan, Sheet ZC 06.a
 - Traffic, Parking, and Transit Plan, Sheet ZC 07.a
 - Site Utilities Plan, Sheet ZC.08.a
 - Pedestrian Facilities and Open Space Map, Sheet ZC.09.a
 - Phasing Plan, Sheet ZC.10.a
 - Preliminary Building Service and Access Plan, Sheet AC.11.a
- Update to Master Traffic Study
- Updated to Master Parking Study
- Update to Master Stormwater Drainage Study
- Addendum to Storrs Center Design Guidelines

The proposal is consistent with the goals, policies and recommendations contained within the Mansfield Plan of Conservation and Development. This finding shall be stated on the record, pursuant to Section 8-3a of the State Statutes.

The proposed zoning map amendment to the Storrs Center master plan is consistent with the goals and policies contained in the Plan of Conservation and Development, particularly the following:

- To strengthen and encourage an orderly and energy-efficient pattern of development with sustainable balance of housing, business, industry, agriculture, government and open space and a supportive infrastructure of utilities, roadways, walkways and bikeways, and public transportation services:
 - Objective c: To encourage mixed use developments, such as the Storrs Center "Downtown" project, in areas with existing or potential sewer and public water.

The proposal is consistent with the expression of regulatory intent and purpose contained in Article I of these regulations and Section 8-2 of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended;

As described in the application, the proposal is consistent with the purpose and intent of the Mansfield Zoning Regulations as well as Section 8-2 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Any proposal to amend the Zoning Map has comprehensively considered: the size and physical characteristics of the subject area; the character and supply of land currently zoned in the subject classification; and the effect of the proposal on existing land uses in the surrounding area.

The alternative development concept proposed through this amendment is less intensive than the original concept, as reflected by a significant decrease in commercial development and elimination of residential and office development from this area of the project and the change from 5-story buildings to 2-story buildings. However, as noted in the attached comments from the Design Review Panel, the proposed design does represent a departure from the original vision for this area of the project. The Panel has recommended several changes, including significant redesign of the site layout to better integrate the proposed site plan with the overall village design principles of the project. The design approach recommended by the Design Review Panel should be considered along with the following changes/additional information:

- *Map Sheet Titles.* As the proposal is to add a development alternative for Market Square, not replace the original concept from the preliminary master plan, the titles of the map sheets should be revised to "Alternative Preliminary Master Plan for Market Square."
- *Preliminary Master Plan (Sheet ZC-05.a).* The applicant should explore the possibility of relocating the curb cut onto Post Office Road further from the intersection with Storrs Road or replacing that access with a Village Street connection. Additionally, Note 3 should be revised to change the State Traffic Commission to the Office of State Traffic Administration (OSTA).
- *Preliminary Grading and Stormwater Management Plan (Sheet ZC.06.a).* A section of the proposed retaining wall along the Village Street is needed to clearly show the change in elevation from the surface of the parking lot to the sidewalk. Additionally, a note should be added to this sheet that requires the use of best management practices as related to Low Impact Development and use of Green Infrastructure pursuant to the 2011 Appendix to the Connecticut Water Quality Manual. Use of the proposed practices should be described as part of any Zoning Permit application, along with explanations as to why certain practices were not proposed for this site.
- *Pedestrian Facilities and Open Spaces Map (Sheet ZC.09.a).* Due to the elevation change between the market and the Village Street sidewalk, stairs are proposed for the pedestrian connection. While a handicap accessible access is not technically required since handicap parking is available on-site, the applicant should explore the possibility of providing a more convenient handicap accessible connection from the Village Street sidewalk (where transit service will be

provided) to the market. Due to the change in elevation, it may not be practical; however, it should be considered as part of the more detailed design done for Zoning Permit review. This can be reflected in a note added to the plan.

- *Phasing Plan (Sheet ZC.10.a)*. The notes from the original phasing plan sheet still apply and should be added to the Market Square alternate.
- *Preliminary Building Service and Access Plan (Sheet ZC.11.a)*. No delivery or loading areas are specified for the corner building; this should be addressed. Note 1 should be amended to state that "Buildings with service areas for loading that are not shown will be on-street or in adjacent surface parking areas."

As part of the application, Storrs Center Alliance updated various studies to show the potential impacts of the new development concept. The results of these studies are summarized below:

- *Master Traffic Study*. The proposed alternative plan will result in a slight increase in overall traffic through the Post Office Road/Storrs Road intersection (8 trips during the AM Peak Hour; 81 trips during the PM Peak Hour); however, these increases are not expected to impact the overall level of service at the intersection.
- *Master Parking Study*. The original parking study estimated peak demand for a grocery store/market in this area to be 2.34 spaces per 1,000 square feet of Gross Leasable Area (GLA). This ratio was reduced from the base ratio of 3.0 spaces per 1,000 SF GLA based on estimates of shoppers/employees walking or biking to the site and combined trips (shopping/dinner, etc.). Under the alternative development plan for the Market Square area, the applicant is estimating that 125 on-site parking spaces will be provided for approximately 36,500 square feet GLA, resulting in a ratio of 3.42 spaces/1,000 SF GLA. The proposed ratio exceeds the number of spaces that would have been needed based on the original parking study without any reductions for shared trips/alternative transportation modes. This ratio also does not account for on-street parking spaces located on Storrs Road and Post Office Road that will also be available for the proposed development.
- *Master Stormwater Drainage Study*. The proposed changes have been designed to mimic the previously accepted peak flow rates and water quality/quantity treatment measures, thereby ensuring compliance with the overall master stormwater drainage study. No adverse impacts are anticipated due to the fact that the design is expected to generate similar runoff rates and matching discharge peak flow rates to the original study.

In addition to updating the technical studies, the applicant has prepared alternative design guidelines for the new development concept. These revisions include the following changes:

- *Description of the Market Square area (Section 2.1.2)*. This description has been updated to reflect the alternative development proposal for Market Square. This section should be further amended to discuss how the rear of the market building will be screened from traffic traveling southbound on Storrs Road and how the service areas will be screened/buffered from the Village Street.
- *Allowable Uses (Section 2.4.1.a)*. This section limits uses under this development concept to non-residential uses that are allowed pursuant to the zoning regulations and allows for surface parking that is buffered by architectural or landscape features.

- *Required height of the buildings (Section 2.4.2.e).* The guidelines for mixed-use development in this area specified two-five stories with a maximum height of 85 feet. The alternative guidelines for this concept require a minimum height of 18 feet and a maximum height of 40 feet. However, based on review of the proposed building composition section drawings, staff would recommend the maximum height be increased to include the clerestory portions of the building, which would not qualify as an exception to the height requirement as drawn. In response to this concern, the applicant proposes to change the maximum height to 45 feet. This change should be made in both the text and the corresponding Figure in 2.4.5.
- *Sidewalk/Terrace/Planting Areas (Section 2.4.4.h).* The minimum widths of the sidewalk/terrace/planting areas along Storrs Road, the front of the building facing the parking area and at building frontages along the Village Street and Post Office road have all been reduced. The minimum widths will now be between 6 feet and 12 feet, as opposed to 8 feet to 18 feet. The reduction along Storrs Road is intended to address the final location of the bus stop. The sidewalk along the Village Street/Post Office Road has been reduced to address the pinch point along the Village Street where the road shifts. References to the Market Square have been eliminated.
- *Fire Hydrants (Section 2.4.4.m).* While not requested by the applicant, the cross-reference in Section 2.4.4.m should be corrected to refer to Section 4.10.c, not 4.9.c.
- *Illustrative Plans and Cross-Sections (Section 2.4.5).* New sections are added to reflect the alternative design. As noted previously, the section should be updated to include the clerestory in the maximum height with changes to the maximum dimension from 40 feet to 45 feet.
- *Building Composition-Market Square (Section 2.4.6a).* This section includes a new rendering depicting a view of Market Square from Storrs Road.
- *Plan and Vista Orientation (Section 2.4.6.b).* This plan identifies key vistas for the Market Square. This figure and the corresponding text should be amended to include the view looking southeast on Storrs Road as a key vista to ensure that the rear of the market building contains appropriate architectural elements and screening to minimize the view of the 'back of house' activities.
- *Building Composition Sketches (Section 2.4.6.c).* These sketches identify how buildings could respond to different vista considerations. As noted above, a sketch should be added depicting the view looking southeast from Storrs Road. Additionally, the applicant may want to remove the specific store name from these sketches.
- *Building Composition-Elevation Studies (Section 2.4.6.d).* These views demonstrate how the massing of the buildings could be broken up into smaller components as well as key design principles for the buildings. For the supermarket building, language should be added regarding the use of architectural features to break up long, blank walls along sidewalks on Storrs Road and the Village Street. In particular, a third sketch and narrative should be added to address the view of the market building from the Village Street. As noted previously, the name of the supermarket should be removed from the sketches.
- *Market Square Public Space Details (Section 4.3.3).* This section has been amended to be consistent with the alternative development proposal. As with the other revisions, this Section will remain in its original form, with the revised language only applying to the alternative concept.
- *Off-Street Surface Parking (Section 4.4.3).* These revisions should specifically note that they are only applicable to surface parking in the Market Square area; the original surface parking guidelines remain in their original form for the remainder of the development. In lieu of the

language proposed for subsection (i), that subsection should direct that site lighting shall comply with the lighting standards contained in Section 4.6.

The Preliminary Master Plan, Master Stormwater Drainage Study, Master Parking Study, Master Traffic Study and Design Guidelines are consistent with the Municipal Development Plan for Storrs Center dated August 2005 and are adequate to ensure safe and appropriate implementation of permitted uses. This approval criterion is specified in Article X, Section S.3.e and is required in addition to the above criteria specified in Article XIII. The Municipal Development Plan (MDP) establishes the framework for the overall use and design of the project. As referenced in many sections of the MDP, the goal of the plan was to provide flexibility to adapt to changing conditions over the long-term. For example, the plan includes the following language on phasing:

It is currently anticipated that the project will contain four basic phases (see Figure 10 for Preliminary Phasing Plan). At present, the proposed phases, as depicted in the attached preliminary phasing plan, are intended to be flexible [and] may be modified or divided as the plan unfolds. A certain amount of flexibility in final project phasing is necessary to respond to the requirements of design, construction, project absorption, marketing, financing and other logistical factors influencing the physical build-out of the plan. Currently proposed and final phases and sub-phases will be based upon the following guiding principles:

- *Each phase should be developed to be self sustaining and should include the necessary components, such as parking, housing, and services, to provide for the viability and functionality of the phase and project pending the addition of subsequent phases.*
- *Each phase will be of sufficient scale to create an immediately coherent neighborhood of buildings and uses and will be planned to support the necessary critical mass to sustain the phase independently.*
- *Each of the mixed use phases will provide an appropriate mix of uses, including housing, parking, retail and commercial space to enable the leasing and sale plans to proceed in a meaningful way.*
- *Each phase will reflect the market conditions in Mansfield as it evolves.*
- *Each phase will be developed to reinforce the phases that have preceded it, creating continuity of the overall development.*
- *Each phase will be considered in light of construction requirements and associated logistics.*
- *Four phases of development are currently projected.*

While conceptual plans for each phase were included in the MDP, the plan also specifically noted that the plans were subject to change as the site planning for the project evolved and became more refined.

Other sections of the MDP reference the specific vision for the Market Square area and describe the different ways in which parking will be provided.

The market will provide retail space oriented towards meeting basic shopping needs for the community of Mansfield and the region. The building type will be mixed-use, with housing on upper floors above the retail and mixed use spaces. The scale of this neighborhood will be higher than the Village Street neighborhood, but there will be an

opportunity to develop a mercantile architectural character that is similar to the Village Street and more heterogeneous than that proposed for the Town Square.

* * * * *

Surface parking will be limited to locations behind buildings and will serve only the occupants of the housing in those buildings.

The proposed alternative development concept does differ from the design intent referenced in the above statements; however, as previously noted, the plan specifically allows for adaptation to respond to changing conditions. If the concerns identified in this report are addressed to the satisfaction of the Commission, I believe that the proposed change would be consistent with the overall intent of the MDP. If the Commission has reservations regarding the consistency of the proposal with the MDP, I would suggest seeking a formal opinion from the Mansfield Downtown Partnership, which is the Municipal Development Agency responsible for the plan.

Summary

The proposed Zoning Map amendment presents a policy issue for the Commission's legislative discretion. This report identifies several issues that should be addressed by the applicant prior to closure of the public hearing, including the potential for redesign of the site plan pursuant to the recommendations of the Design Review Panel.

PAGE
BREAK

TOWN OF MANSFIELD
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

LINDA M. PAINTER, AICP, DIRECTOR

Memo to: Planning and Zoning Commission
From: Linda M. Painter, AICP, Director of Planning and Development
Date: **September 27, 2012**
Subject: Design Review Panel Comments on proposed Storrs Center Zoning Map Amendment File #1246-10

On Wednesday, September 26, 2012, the Design Review Panel reviewed the proposed amendment to the Storrs Center Special Design District and offered the following comments. Members present were Miniutti, Gillard and Brown.

The members supported the concept of incorporating a grocery store/neighborhood supermarket into the development; however, they questioned the appropriateness of the Phase 4/Market Square location for this use and identified the following objections/concerns with the proposed site plan, including:

- Disappointment that the village design principles that guided the development of Phase 1 are not being applied to this phase, particularly with regard to massing, siting of buildings, and use of surface parking in such a prominent location. Members noted that the original master plan for the development only anticipated surface parking in the residential area to the rear of the Village Street, where it would only be visible to residents of that phase.
- Use/placement of surface parking at the southern gateway to the project
- Loss of the 'Market Square' green space
- Location of the proposed grocery store on the site and the resulting failure to establish a strong gateway at the intersection of Storrs Road and Post Office Road/Route 275.

In response to the above listed concerns, the members offered the following recommendations as alternatives to the proposed design with the goal of incorporating the market use in a manner that better integrates with the overall village design of the project:

- Consider other locations in the project where the existing parking structure could be used for parking to eliminate the need for surface parking.
- If relocation to another site/phase is not possible, redesign the site plan in accordance with the following:
 - Move the market building to the intersection of Storrs Road and Post Office Road. The building should address the corner, with loading and service facilities facing the Village Street.
 - Take advantage of the elevation change between Storrs Road and the Village Street and consider having a lower service level for service/production activities (such as meat

cutting) to reduce the building footprint. This could provide additional area for surface parking.

- Retain the 'Market Square Green' somewhere along Storrs Road to provide both an inviting public open space for the outdoor café seating to overlook and to break up the appearance of surface parking. If possible, it would be preferable to have the bus stop on Storrs Road located adjacent to the Market Square.
- Explore the possibility of developing a shared surface parking lot with the neighboring property owner to the north as a way to meet the parking needs of both properties.
- Use landscape/architectural features to buffer the expanse of surface parking from Storrs Road.
- Eliminate the MP-2 (5,000 square foot) building if needed to ensure adequate parking. If the sole purpose of the building in the proposed design was to reinforce the corner, that building would no longer be needed with the shifting of the market building to the intersection.

Town of Mansfield
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Meeting of 19 September 2012
Conference B, Audrey P. Beck Building
(draft) MINUTES

Members present: Joan Buck (Alt.), Robert Dahn, Quentin Kessel, Scott Lehmann. *Members absent:* Aline Booth (Alt.), Neil Facchinetti, Peter Drzewiecki, Frank Trainor, John Silander. *Others present:* Grant Meitzler (Wetlands Agent), Linda Painter (Town Planner).

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:31p by Chair Quentin Kessel. Alternate Joan Buck was designated a voting member for this meeting. {John Silander came to the meeting but was excused before it was called to order when it was clear that he was not needed for a quorum; he was to leave for Vladivostock the next day.}

2. The draft minutes of the 18 July 2012 meeting were approved as written; the August meeting was cancelled.

3. **State Plan of Conservation and Development.** Linda Painter informed the Commission that the State is in the process of updating its Plan of Conservation and Development, which is supposed to guide project planning and funding by state agencies. Much of the guidance will be provided by maps that place particular parcels of land in *conservation, development, or balance* zones, depending upon whether such parcels meet certain criteria. There are six conservation criteria (e.g., prime agricultural land, wetlands, critical habitat) and six development criteria (e.g., water/sewer connections, census block classified as urban, mass transit access).

The idea is to direct development projects and funding to development zones and conservation projects and funding to conservation zones. Balance zones satisfy some conservation criteria and some development criteria; projects in this zone would require balancing conservation and development. To prioritize projects and funding, conservation and development areas are further classified by how many of the conservation or development criteria they meet. Since funding is always limited, the state might consider funding only projects in “high priority” conservation or development zones that meet at least 5 of the 6 criteria for such zones.

Since the Town depends upon state funding for many projects, it is important that its own Plan of Conservation and Development be aligned with the State’s Plan, preferably by having State maps reflect the Town’s conservation and development goals.

Some concerns about the State’s zoning procedure emerged in discussion: (1) Areas classified as “high priority” development zones may not be eligible for state grants for open space purchases, although open space may be particularly valuable for residents of these zones; surely urban parks can add a great deal to the quality of life in urban areas. (2) Balance zones can lump together parcels of very different character – for example, parcels that would be zoned “high priority” conservation areas but for satisfying one of the development criteria and parcels that would be zoned “high priority” development areas but for satisfying one of the conservation criteria.

4. **PZC Applications.** Painter reported to the Commission on several applications before the PZC.

a. **PZC 1284-2 (Whispering Glen, 73 Meadowbrook Rd)** In 2009 the PZC approved a development with 37 condominium units on this site. The developers have reconsidered the market for large condominiums and are now asking for approval of 54 smaller units instead.

The Commission considered the original application at its meeting of 18 March 2009. Since the amended application calls for even greater density, the Commission's comments on W1424, quoted here from the minutes, are worth reiterating:

- The design of the stormwater management system should be scrutinized to insure that it is up to the task; uncontrolled runoff could erode the steep slope and dump sediment into the wetland and brook below.
- The erosion potential of the trail providing access to the conservation area could be reduced by running it along the bottom of the slope rather than half-way up.
- To enhance protection of the wetland and brook, the steep slope should be included in the conservation area.
- Given the high density of development and the potential for storm-water impacts on the slope and wetlands below, the Commission suggests eliminating those units proposed for construction within the regulated area.

b. **PZC 1312 (Healey Banquet Hall, 476 Storrs Rd)** This barn-conversion project has been approved by the IWA. The applicant is now seeking PZC approval for overflow parking on Town land and for exceptions to zoning regulations concerning set-back, building height, and the like – issues outside the Commission's purview.

c. **PZC 1246-10 (Storrs Center)** The Storrs Center developers propose to replace planned retail buildings with underground parking along Rte. 195 from Post Office Rd to the old Storrs Drug location with a small retail building at the corner, a parking lot, and then a small supermarket. Drainage and wetlands would not be affected by this change.

d. **PZC 1311 (Sauve subdivision, North Windham Rd)** This is a pre-application submission for a 3-lot subdivision off N. Windham Rd. {Lehmann participated in the 28 August Field Trip to the site; his report is attached.} The applicants propose a common driveway from N. Windham Rd. to access three lots on a plateau to the north; frontage on the road, along with wetland, an open area, and an open meadow below and west of the plateau would be dedicated open space. Kessel reported that the Open Space Committee had discussed an alternate proposal: enlarge one of the lots to include all the open space areas and protect them with conservation easements. Lehmann was not enthusiastic about this, pointing out that dedicated open space areas to the west would enhance Mansfield Hollow State Park (to which they are adjacent) and that conservation easements on private land do not afford public access. {Painter left the meeting.}

5. IWA referral: W1501 (Block, 8-22 Hanks Hill Rd) An old 12x60 ft 'mobile home' has been removed and a pad prepared for a new 27x48 ft modular unit (which, in virtue of its shorter length, would be a little farther from a drainage stream). Like all the other units in this development, this one would be served by UConn water and sewer. The Commission agreed unanimously (**motion:** Dahn, Lehmann) that no significant impact on wetlands was likely.

6. Annual Report. With insertion of "together with the Conservation Commissions of Ashford and Willington" between "and" and "hosted" in the third bullet under "Accomplishments", the Commission unanimously approved (**motion:** Buck, Dahn) the FY2011-12 Report drafted by Linda Painter and thanked her for preparing it.

7. Updates. Kessel reported that EIEs for the 4-Corners Water & Sewer Project and UConn's Hazardous Waste Transfer Station are still forthcoming.

8. Adjourned at 8:44p. Next meeting: 7:30p, Wednesday, 17 October 2012.

Scott Lehmann, Secretary, 20 September 2012.



Mansfield Downtown Partnership

Helping to Build Mansfield's Future

September 24, 2012

JoAnn Goodwin, Chair
Mansfield Planning and Zoning Commission
Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
4 South Eagleville Road
Mansfield, CT 06268

Re: Storrs Center Alliance, LLC
Application to Amend the Mansfield Zoning Map
Storrs Center Special Design District

Dear Chair Goodwin and Members of the Commission:

On behalf of the Mansfield Downtown Partnership Board of Directors, I am writing to support Storrs Center Alliance's application to amend the Mansfield Zoning Map for the Storrs Center Special Design District to allow for a grocery store use and a reduction in the amount of retail/commercial space in the Market Square area.

We are pleased with the progress of Storrs Center with the opening of the first apartments in August and nine businesses as of mid-September. All the businesses should be open in the first phase by late fall. Phase 1B is underway and will open in August 2013. A grocery store has been envisioned by the Partnership from the beginning of its planning efforts for Storrs Center. Many members of the community have asked whether a grocery store will be part of Storrs Center as it would allow for shopping within walking distance of nearby neighborhoods, as well as the civic and business uses in the area. A grocery store will be a great asset as we continue to create a vibrant and successful downtown.

At its September 6 Board meeting, the Partnership Board unanimously endorsed the following motion:

Move, to endorse and convey the Mansfield Downtown Partnership's support for the application of Storrs Center Alliance, LLC, as submitted on August 29, 2012 to the Mansfield Planning and Zoning Commission. The application seeks to amend the Mansfield Zoning Map with respect to the Market Square area of the Storrs Center Special Design District. The proposed modifications include the incorporation of a new supermarket in the Market Square area, together with additional uses, in a manner that has the full support of the Mansfield Downtown Partnership.



Mansfield Downtown Partnership
Helping to Build Mansfield's Future

Thank you for your consideration of the Storrs Center Alliance application to amend the Zoning Map relative to the Storrs Center Special Design District. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Cynthia van Zelm, the Partnership's Executive Director, at 860-429-2740.

Sincerely,

Philip Lodewick ^{wt}

Philip Lodewick
President

cc: Mansfield Downtown Partnership Board of Directors

TOWN OF MANSFIELD
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

LINDA M. PAINTER, AICP, DIRECTOR

Memo to: Planning and Zoning Commission
From: Linda M. Painter, AICP, Director of Planning and Development *guf*
Date: September 27, 2012
Subject: Sauve Subdivision (29 North Windham Road)
Subdivision Design Process Submission (PZC File 1311)

Project Overview

The subject property is comprised of a 10.74 acre parcel located on north side of North Windham Road, west of Bates Road. The property has ±238 feet of frontage along North Windham Road. The front portion of the property is currently developed with a single-family home, detached garage, shed and barn. All of the structures are vacant and as a result of disuse, gradually falling into disrepair. The applicant is proposing to subdivide the property into 3 lots for single-family homes; this would require construction of a new street unless a common driveway was approved by the Commission.

In accordance with Section 5.2 of the Mansfield Subdivision Regulations, James Sauve has submitted the following plans as part of the required design process for subdivisions containing over 4 lots or a street:

- Off-Site and Neighborhood Influences Inventory Plan
- Site Analysis Plan
- Yield Plan
- Preliminary Subdivision Layout

Due to the small size of the property, I approved a request from the applicant to consolidate Steps 1 and 2 of the Design Process.

Preliminary Comments

The following comments and recommendations are based on the submitted materials and a site visits made by the Open Space Preservation Committee on September 9, 2012, which I attended. As part of the Design Review Process, the proposed subdivision was reviewed by both the Conservation Commission and Open Space Preservation Committee. Their comments are attached for the Commission's consideration and their key recommendations are summarized below.

With regard to the yield plan, the applicant has demonstrated that a cul-de-sac could be constructed on the subject property to provide access to each lot. Each of the three lots would meet the minimum size (90,000 square feet), developable area (40,000 square feet), and frontage requirements along the cul-de-sac. As such, 3 lots are an acceptable yield provided the Eastern Highlands Health District (EHHD) confirms that the site can provide water and septic capacity for three homes. This review will not be completed until a formal application is made.

In accordance with Section 5.1 of the Subdivision Regulations, primary considerations in designing streets, walkways/bikeways and other public improvements, lot layouts, proposed locations for houses, driveways, sanitary systems and other site work and identifying open space preservation areas shall be:

The protection and enhancement of vehicular and pedestrian safety through the appropriate siting of streets, driveways, walkways, bikeways and trails.

The subject property has ± 236 feet of frontage on North Windham Road. The property frontage is bounded on both sides by Mansfield Hollow State Park. North Windham Road dead-ends at a parking lot for the park that provides access to the southernmost point on the Nipmuck Trail.

The applicant has demonstrated through the yield plan that a short cul-de-sac could be constructed to serve the three proposed lots; however, the applicant would prefer to use a common driveway. As is noted elsewhere in this report, the common driveway is the preferred approach for this site as it will reduce site development impacts and eliminate the need for a wetland crossing. According to the site analysis plan submitted by the applicant, there are no sight line issues

The protection and enhancement of existing and potential public water supply wells and ground water and surface water quality through appropriate design and installation of sanitary systems, roadways, drainage facilities, house sites and other site improvements.

Public Water Supply. There are no public water supply wells located in close proximity to the property. According to the site analysis plan prepared by the applicant, the front developed portion of the property is within the aquifer recharge area. GIS maps of the stratified drift aquifer indicate that it may extend over the western and eastern portions of the property as well. At the time of final subdivision design, the actual boundaries of the stratified drift aquifer should be mapped pursuant to the list of reference sources in Article VI, Section B.4.m of the Mansfield Zoning Regulations. If septic systems are proposed within 500 feet of aquifer areas, the applicant shall submit a written report from a sanitary engineer and/or geologist or other qualified professional detailing the system design, physical characteristics of the area, existing land uses, and potential short-term and cumulative impacts on identified aquifer areas.

Low Impact Development. The use of a common driveway as proposed will reduce the area of impervious surface, thereby improving aquifer recharge. To the maximum extent possible, other Low Impact Development techniques as identified in the 2011 Appendix to the Connecticut Stormwater Quality Manual should be used to maintain pre-development hydrology.

Well and Septic Suitability. Due to the preliminary nature of this submission, Eastern Highlands Health District has not yet reviewed the proposed well and septic systems. The applicant is advised that should EHHD determine that the property cannot support three houses, the number of homes/lots must be reduced accordingly.

The protection and enhancement of natural and manmade features, including wetlands, watercourses, aquifer areas, agricultural lands, hilltops or ridges, historic sites and features, expanses of valley floors, interior forests, significant trees and scenic views and vistas on and adjacent to the subdivision site. Wherever appropriate, site features shall be protected through a clustering of streets and house sites

and the identification and preservation of significant open space areas including agricultural lands, interior forests and other land without physical limitations.

The following summary of the site's natural resources was provided by the Open Space Preservation Committee:

The Sauve property is next to Mansfield Hollow State Park on the east (a 2-acre wooded parcel) and on the west (large hay field). The Nipmuck Trail starts at the end of the dead-end street and skirts the far side of this hay field. There are also numerous old roads and side trails in this part of the Park, offering hiking, biking and horse-back riding options. Hunting is allowed in this part of the Park. The north side of the property abuts Bassetts Bridge Gardens, whose owners have recently clearcut the area next the property boundary to create an agricultural field, possibly for blueberry production. Across the street are several small house lots.

The property has four distinct areas:

- A level area on the street containing a house, garage, shed and small horse barn with two wells. This is overgrown with barnyard weeds. The owner indicated that he would demolish the buildings and has proposed a .72-acre open space area there.
- A wooded knoll on the north side of the house which was logged as part of the foreclosure process. Some large trees remain, but most would be removed to create three house lots on a shared driveway.
- A level 1.63-acre field along the west side of the knoll, which is accessed by a farm lane from the house area and is bounded by stone walls. This field has Merrimack soil, which is rated as prime farmland by NRCS. It is a former pasture and is currently not used (mostly goldenrod at this time). This field has not been used recently, so could probably be certified for organic production. A wooded hedgerow separates this field from the large hayfield in the Park. The owner has proposed this field as an open space dedication.
- A small wooded knoll (1.35 acres) on the northeast side of the field. It abuts Bassetts Bridge Gardens on the north side. Mr. Sauve has proposed this area as an open space dedication. A narrow wetland separates it from the knoll with proposed house lots.

A number of invasive plant species were noted throughout the property.

Wetlands. As noted there is a wetland that enters the property from the north and extends to the southwest portion of the property adjacent to Mansfield Hollow. As shown on the yield plan, construction of a cul-de-sac would require the siting of one of the house lots on the west side of the wetland, necessitating a wetland crossing. The need for this crossing is eliminated with the proposed use of a common driveway. As such, the use of the common driveway is the preferred development approach in this case.

Wildlife Habitat. According to the Connecticut Natural Diversity Database, the site may provide habitat for protected species. The applicant is advised to submit a request for review by the DEEP Bureau of Natural Resources Wildlife Division.

Open Space Preservation. With regard to other natural resources, the OSPC recommended that the focus be on protecting agricultural soils and encouraging agricultural use of the property. They offered the following two options for the Commission's consideration while indicating a preference for the first

option and noting that they would like more information on the area along the street if Option 2 is the preference.

1. Include the three proposed open space areas in Lot 1 with an agricultural easement on these areas to preserve their use as such. These easements would carry with the deed when ownership changed hands. The owner of Lot 1 could use the lands for agricultural purposes or lease them to someone else. The committee suggests that Mr. Sauve consider not demolishing the barn and wells so that they would be available for agriculture uses. A minimum of 5 acres for Lot 1 is recommended so that Town zoning regulations would offer the greatest flexibility for agricultural uses.
2. An alternative option would be Town ownership of the field and knoll. The field could be leased to a farmer by the Town. The wooded knoll would provide a buffer between the proposed house lots and potential access to the field from adjoining agricultural properties. The area along the road could present management issues once the house and other buildings are demolished. The committee could not determine what the condition or potential of that land would be after demolition. Thus, the committee recommends that it be incorporated in Lot 1, with possibly a conservation easement. An ROW to the field along the common driveway and farm lane would be necessary for Town access to the field from the street. The farm lane to the field may cut across Park land for a short distance. That would need to be confirmed and addressed if the Town wants access via the lane.

The Conservation Commission was briefed on the proposal and the discussion by the Open Space Preservation Committee. The Commission took no formal position on the open space proposals, other than one member noting that his personal preference was for the dedication of open space as opposed to conservation easements.

The utilization of a site's natural terrain, avoiding unnecessary re-grading, filling and removal activities.

The property is characterized by a large, central ridge that begins at the northern boundary and extends to the front part of the property. Another, smaller ridge is located at the northwest portion of the site. The change in elevation from the lowest point on the property near North Windham Road to the top of the ridge is approximately 40 feet. Approximately 16% of the site has slopes in excess of 15%.

While not depicted on the proposed layout plan, it is anticipated that the use of a common driveway will significantly reduce the amount of re-grading required as compared to the construction of a cul-de-sac. This option also eliminates the need for a wetland crossing.

The promotion of energy efficient patterns of development and land use, energy conservation and the use of solar and renewable forms of energy through the appropriate siting of streets, driveways and house sites, and wherever appropriate, bikeway and walkway/trail connections to neighboring streets and neighborhoods; existing and planned commercial areas; schools, parks and other public facilities and town designated walkway or bicycle routes.

As noted on the site analysis plan, the existing ridges provide the opportunity to orient the homes to take advantage of solar gain and summer breezes. This should be specifically addressed as part of the final subdivision plan.

Summary/Recommendations

Based on the in the development of final plans:

- Proceed with the preliminary subdivision plan that makes use of the common driveway option.
- Expand Lot 1 to include the open space preservation areas as agricultural easement areas. To provide the greatest agricultural flexibility, Lot 1 should be at least 5 acres in size. It is also recommended that the applicant consider retaining the barn and wells to increase the agricultural viability of the property.
- Map the actual boundaries of the stratified drift aquifer pursuant to the list of reference sources in in Article VI, Section B.4.m of the Mansfield Zoning Regulations. If septic systems are proposed within 500 feet of aquifer areas, the applicant shall submit a written report from a sanitary engineer and/or geologist or other qualified professional detailing the system design, physical characteristics of the area, existing land uses, and potential short-term and cumulative impacts on identified aquifer areas.
- Incorporate Low Impact Development techniques as identified in the 2011 Appendix to the Connecticut Stormwater Quality Manual to maintain pre-development hydrology to the maximum extent practicable.
- Identify the specific lot frontage and building setback lines requested as part of the final application and how the requests comply with the criteria for approving waivers.
- Identify how the common driveway complies with the requirements of Sections 7.9-7.11 of the Subdivision regulations.
- Identify significant trees to be preserved pursuant to Section 7.8 of the Subdivision Regulations.
- Preserve stone walls wherever possible. Where stone walls must be impacted, provide a plan for reuse of the stones in accordance with Section 7.7 of the Subdivision Regulations.
- Identify how the homes will be sited to take advantage of solar gain and summer breezes.
- Submit a request for review by the DEEP Bureau of Natural Resources Wildlife Division and address the resulting correspondence/recommendations in the final subdivision design/application. A copy of the DEEP correspondence should be included with the application.

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September 18, 2012

To: Linda Painter, Director of Planning

From: Open Space Preservation Committee

Re: Sauve Pre-subdivision Application

At their September 18, 2012, meeting the Open Space Preservation Committee reviewed the Sauve 3-lot pre-subdivision application, which is a combined Site Analysis Assessment and Conceptual Layout Plan. The committee toured most of the property on North Windham Road on September 9, 2012. Three areas are proposed as open space dedications. Noted features and recommendations.

Off-Site and Neighborhood Influences

The Sauve property is next to Mansfield Hollow State Park on the east (a 2-acre wooded parcel) and on the west (large hay field). The Nipmuck Trail starts at the end of the dead-end street and skirts the far side of this hay field. There are also numerous old roads and side trails in this part of the Park, offering hiking, biking and horse-back riding options. Hunting is allowed in this part of the Park. The north side of the property abuts Bassetts Bridge Gardens, whose owners have recently clearcut the area next the property boundary to create an agricultural field, possibly for blueberry production. Across the street are several small house lots.

Site Assessment

The Sauve property has four distinct areas:

1. A level area on the street containing a house, garage, shed and small horse barn with two wells. This is overgrown with barnyard weeds. The owner indicated that he would demolish the buildings and has proposed a .72-acre open space area there.
2. A wooded knoll on the north side of the house which was logged as part of the foreclosure process. Some large trees remain, but most would be removed to create three house lots on a shared driveway.
3. A level 1.63-acre field along the west side of the knoll, which is accessed by a farm lane from the house area and is bounded by stone walls. This field has Merrimack soil, which is rated as prime farmland by NRCS. It is a former pasture and is currently not used (mostly goldenrod at this time). This field has not been used recently, so could probably be certified for organic production. A wooded hedgerow separates this field from the large hayfield in the Park. The owner has proposed this field as an open space dedication.
4. A small wooded knoll (1.35 areas) on the northeast side of the field. It abuts Bassetts Bridge Gardens on the north side. Mr. Sauve has proposed this area as an open space dedication. A narrow wetland separates it from the knoll with proposed house lots.

A number of invasive plant species were noted throughout the property.

Recommendations

Because of the adjoining agricultural properties, the committee would prefer to encourage continued agricultural use of the Sauve property. Two possible actions are recommended for consideration.

1. Include the three proposed open space areas in Lot 1 with an agricultural easement on these areas to preserve their use as such. These easements would carry with the deed when ownership changed hands. The owner of Lot 1 could use the lands for agricultural purposes or lease them to someone else. The committee suggests that Mr. Sauve consider not demolishing the barn and wells so that they would be available for agriculture uses. A minimum of 5 acres for Lot 1 is recommended so that Town zoning regulations would offer the greatest flexibility for agricultural uses.
2. An alternative option would be Town ownership of the field and knoll. The field could be leased to a farmer by the Town. The wooded knoll would provide a buffer between the proposed house lots and potential access to the field from adjoining agricultural properties. The area along the road could present management issues once the house and other buildings are demolished. The committee could not determine what the condition or potential of that land would be after demolition. Thus, the committee recommends that it be incorporated in Lot 1, with possibly a conservation easement. An ROW to the field along the common driveway and farm lane would be necessary for Town access to the field from the street. The farm lane to the field may cut across Park land for a short distance. That would need to be confirmed and addressed if the Town wants access via the lane.

The committee prefers Option 1, but would support Option 2 if that is more acceptable to PZC.

Town of Mansfield
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Meeting of 19 September 2012
Conference B, Audrey P. Beck Building
(draft) MINUTES

Members present: Joan Buck (Alt.), Robert Dahn, Quentin Kessel, Scott Lehmann. *Members absent:* Aline Booth (Alt.), Neil Facchinetti, Peter Drzewiecki, Frank Trainor, John Silander. *Others present:* Grant Meitzler (Wetlands Agent), Linda Painter (Town Planner).

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:31p by Chair Quentin Kessel. Alternate Joan Buck was designated a voting member for this meeting. {John Silander came to the meeting but was excused before it was called to order when it was clear that he was not needed for a quorum; he was to leave for Vladivostok the next day.}

2. The draft minutes of the 18 July 2012 meeting were approved as written; the August meeting was cancelled.

3. **State Plan of Conservation and Development.** Linda Painter informed the Commission that the State is in the process of updating its Plan of Conservation and Development, which is supposed to guide project planning and funding by state agencies. Much of the guidance will be provided by maps that place particular parcels of land in *conservation, development, or balance* zones, depending upon whether such parcels meet certain criteria. There are six conservation criteria (e.g., prime agricultural land, wetlands, critical habitat) and six development criteria (e.g., water/sewer connections, census block classified as urban, mass transit access).

The idea is to direct development projects and funding to development zones and conservation projects and funding to conservation zones. Balance zones satisfy some conservation criteria and some development criteria; projects in this zone would require balancing conservation and development. To prioritize projects and funding, conservation and development areas are further classified by how many of the conservation or development criteria they meet. Since funding is always limited, the state might consider funding only projects in “high priority” conservation or development zones that meet at least 5 of the 6 criteria for such zones.

Since the Town depends upon state funding for many projects, it is important that its own Plan of Conservation and Development be aligned with the State’s Plan, preferably by having State maps reflect the Town’s conservation and development goals.

Some concerns about the State’s zoning procedure emerged in discussion: (1) Areas classified as “high priority” development zones may not be eligible for state grants for open space purchases, although open space may be particularly valuable for residents of these zones; surely urban parks can add a great deal to the quality of life in urban areas. (2) Balance zones can lump together parcels of very different character – for example, parcels that would be zoned “high priority” conservation areas but for satisfying one of the development criteria and parcels that would be zoned “high priority” development areas but for satisfying one of the conservation criteria.

4. **PZC Applications.** Painter reported to the Commission on several applications before the PZC.

- a. **PZC 1284-2 (Whispering Glen, 73 Meadowbrook Rd)** In 2009 the PZC approved a development with 37 condominium units on this site. The developers have reconsidered the market for large condominiums and are now asking for approval of 54 smaller units instead.

The Commission considered the original application at its meeting of 18 March 2009. Since the amended application calls for even greater density, the Commission's comments on W1424, quoted here from the minutes, are worth reiterating:

- The design of the stormwater management system should be scrutinized to insure that it is up to the task; uncontrolled runoff could erode the steep slope and dump sediment into the wetland and brook below.
 - The erosion potential of the trail providing access to the conservation area could be reduced by running it along the bottom of the slope rather than half-way up.
 - To enhance protection of the wetland and brook, the steep slope should be included in the conservation area.
 - Given the high density of development and the potential for storm-water impacts on the slope and wetlands below, the Commission suggests eliminating those units proposed for construction within the regulated area.
- b. **PZC 1312 (Healey Banquet Hall, 476 Storrs Rd)** This barn-conversion project has been approved by the IWA. The applicant is now seeking PZC approval for overflow parking on Town land and for exceptions to zoning regulations concerning set-back, building height, and the like – issues outside the Commission's purview.
- c. **PZC 1246-10 (Storrs Center)** The Storrs Center developers propose to replace planned retail buildings with underground parking along Rte. 195 from Post Office Rd to the old Storrs Drug location with a small retail building at the corner, a parking lot, and then a small supermarket. Drainage and wetlands would not be affected by this change.
- d. **PZC 1311 (Sauve subdivision, North Windham Rd)** This is a pre-application submission for a 3-lot subdivision off N. Windham Rd. {Lehmann participated in the 28 August Field Trip to the site; his report is attached.} The applicants propose a common driveway from N. Windham Rd. to access three lots on a plateau to the north; frontage on the road, along with wetland, an open area, and an open meadow below and west of the plateau would be dedicated open space. Kessel reported that the Open Space Committee had discussed an alternate proposal: enlarge one of the lots to include all the open space areas and protect them with conservation easements. Lehmann was not enthusiastic about this, pointing out that dedicated open space areas to the west would enhance Mansfield Hollow State Park (to which they are adjacent) and that conservation easements on private land do not afford public access. {Painter left the meeting.}

5. IWA referral: W1501 (Block, 8-22 Hanks Hill Rd) An old 12x60 ft 'mobile home' has been removed and a pad prepared for a new 27x48 ft modular unit (which, in virtue of its shorter length, would be a little farther from a drainage stream). Like all the other units in this development, this one would be served by UConn water and sewer. The Commission agreed unanimously (**motion: Dahn, Lehmann**) that no significant impact on wetlands was likely.

6. Annual Report. With insertion of "together with the Conservation Commissions of Ashford and Willington" between "and" and "hosted" in the third bullet under "Accomplishments", the Commission unanimously approved (**motion: Buck, Dahn**) the FY2011-12 Report drafted by Linda Painter and thanked her for preparing it.

7. Updates. Kessel reported that EIEs for the 4-Corners Water & Sewer Project and UConn's Hazardous Waste Transfer Station are still forthcoming.

8. Adjourned at 8:44p. Next meeting: 7:30p, Wednesday, 17 October 2012.

Scott Lehmann, Secretary, 20 September 2012.

Attachment: Field Trip Reports

28 August Field Trip

W 1500 (Tolis, Hickory La). An above-ground pool & deck is proposed on a level terrace near the house. The edge of the terrace is formed by a stone retaining wall, below which lawn slopes to wetlands (about 80 ft from the proposed pool at the closest point). A catastrophic failure of the pool wall that quickly emptied 1K ft³ of water into the wetland might not be good for it, but this seems too unlikely to worry about.

PZC 1311 (Sauve, North Windham Rd). A 3-lot subdivision will be proposed for a 10.7-acre site fronting on Windham Rd; this was a pre-application visit. Existing buildings on North Windham Rd. would be demolished; a common driveway would access three lots on a plateau in the east central portion of the property; stone walls would be undisturbed, save for one driveway cut. The well-planned tour climbed to the plateau and circled the area proposed for development. On the west, the plateau slopes steeply down to wetland and two attractive open areas adjoining Mansfield Hollow State Park; this portion of the property would be open space. On the southeast, the plateau also slopes steeply down to an isolated piece of the Park on the north side of North Windham Rd. The plateau appears to have been logged within the past five years or so, and what remains there is mostly low-value pine. In my view, the area proposed for open space is the area of greatest conservation-value. The only suggestion I'd make is to protect the steep slopes west and southeast of the plateau with conservation easements.

12 September Field Trip

W 1501 (Block, 8-22 Hanks Hill Rd) The proposal is to replace a single-wide (12 ft) modular unit with a double-wide (24 ft) one. The new unit is shorter and would therefore be slightly farther from a drainage ditch behind it that carries runoff from Hanks Hill Rd and beyond into a wetland below. Like the other units in this "mobile home" park, this one would be connected to UConn water and sewer. By the time of the site visit, the old unit was gone and a widened pad was ready for the new one. It's hard for me to see a significant wetlands impact from this project, especially if impact is reckoned relative to the old installation.

PZC 1284-2 (Whispering Glen, 73 Meadowbrook La) The housing slump has led the developers of this parcel to reconsider their PZC-approved proposal to construct 30-some large townhouse units and to propose 54 smaller ones instead. Relative to the original plan, the development's layout, landscaping, and open space dedication seem unchanged, but units are smaller and some "active" recreation facilities (for horseshoes & volleyball) have been added. The developer did not show up for our visit; we walked the length of the area to be developed on an old driveway, but did not see much of interest (the area is now pretty jungly). There may be a question of whether provision for open space and recreation is sufficient, given that more people will be housed in the development. However, the portion of the property of greatest conservation-value – the area along Conantville Brook – is already included in dedicated open space.

Scott Lehmann, 13.IX.12

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TOWN OF MANSFIELD
OFFICE OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

LINDA M. PAINTER, AICP, DIRECTOR

Memo to: Mansfield Planning and Zoning Commission
From: Linda M. Painter, AICP, Director of Planning and Development
Date: September 27, 2012
Re: Modification to Eastbrook Mall Special Permit, File #1307



In February 2012 the Planning and Zoning Commission approved a special permit for an addition to the north side of Eastbrook Mall (Michaels). To accommodate the building addition, the existing driveway was shifted to the north, requiring the installation of a gravity retaining wall along the south property line. This change created a canyon-like effect between the building and the property line.

The applicant has been in discussions with the neighboring property owner with the purpose of obtaining a 'right to grade' easement on the adjacent property. If they are successful in obtaining this easement, a majority of the gravity retaining wall would no longer be needed, and would be replaced by a planted and irrigated slope. A small section of retaining wall would remain in the area of the northeast corner of the addition, where the driveway curves around the building.

Additionally, the applicant has requested approval to change the brand of retaining wall from Evergreen to SmartSlope. The proposed retaining wall brand uses smaller planting boxes which allow for a more natural curve. Images of both brands are attached for your information.

Recommendation

The proposed modification is a significant improvement over the originally approved plan in that only a small section of retaining wall will be needed. If the Commission agrees, the following motion would be in order:

That the Planning and Zoning Commission hereby approves the modification to Special Permit 1307 as described in applications dated 9/26/2012 and 8/17/2012 to allow the use of a planted slope in lieu of a retaining wall as depicted on the sheet labeled EXB-1 dated 8/30/2012 and to allow the use of a SmartSlope living retaining wall for the portion of the wall that remains. This approval shall not take effect until the applicant has provided an executed easement/agreement with the adjacent property owner to the north that authorizes grading on the adjacent property.

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REQUEST FOR SITE/BUILDING MODIFICATIONS
(see Article XI, Section D of the Mansfield Zoning Regulations)

APPLICANT/OWNER SECTION

1. Owner(s) EASTBROOK F. LLC (THOMAS KLEIN) Telephone _____
(please PRINT)
Address 360 BLOOMFIELD AVE, Suite 303 Town WINDSOR Zip 06095
JOHN WHITCOMB
2. Applicant(s) BL COMPANIES Telephone 203-630-1406
(please PRINT)
Address 355 RESEARCH PARKWAY Town MERIDEN Zip 06450
3. Site Location EAST BROOK MALL
4. Reference any approved map(s) that would be superseded if this request is approved:

SP-1, GU-1

5. Reference any new map(s) submitted as part of this request:

SP-1A AND GU-1A, EXHIBIT A

6. Itemize and describe the modification(s) being requested, using separate sheet where necessary. The description must be adequate to determine compliance with all applicable land use regulations: -

THE APPLICANT SEEKS TO REVISE THE APPROVED PLAN
BY INSTALLING A FULLY LANDSCAPED AND IRRIGATED
SLOPE VERSUS THE RETAINING WALL CURRENTLY APPROVED.
THE RETAINING WALL CALLED FOR INCLUDED A PLANTED
AND IRRIGATED FACE. INSTALLATION OF THE SLOPE WILL
REQUIRE AN AGREEMENT WITH THE DIRECT ADJUTER
AS GRADING OVER THE PROPERTY LINE WILL BE REQUIRED
IN THIS AREA. THIS AGREEMENT IS IN THE PROCESS OF
BEING COMPLETED.

7. John Whitcomb
Applicant's signature

date 9/26/2012

(over)

ZONING AGENT'S SECTION

After reviewing this application with respect to provisions of the Mansfield Zoning Regulations, including Article XI, Section D and Article V, Sections A.8 and B.9, the following determination has been made:

1. The subject modification request does not contain adequate information and is therefore denied. Applicable comments are listed below.
2. The subject modification is denied for reasons listed below.
3. The subject modification request has been reviewed with the PZC Chairman and we have concurred that the requested modification is minor in nature. Subject to any special conditions or comments noted below, the subject modification request is approved.
4. The subject modification request has been reviewed with the PZC and, in accordance with PZC action on _____, the subject modification request is approved, subject to any special conditions or comments noted below.
5. The subject modification request has been reviewed with the PZC and, in accordance with PZC action on _____, the subject modification request is considered a significant alteration of the approved plans and/or site, and shall require the submittal and processing of a new site plan or special permit application.
6. Other (see comments below)

Special conditions/comments/reasons for denial:

Zoning Agent's signature

date _____

PZC Chairman's signature (items 3 and 4 above)

date _____

PZC file _____

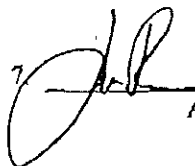
REQUEST FOR SITE/BUILDING MODIFICATIONS
(see Article XI, Section D of the Mansfield Zoning Regulations)

APPLICANT/OWNER SECTION

1. Owner(s) Thomas Klein, Eastbrook F, LLC Telephone 860-683-9000
(please PRINT)
Address 360 Bloomfield Avenue Town Windsor Zip 06095
2. Applicant(s) John Whitcomb Telephone 203-630-1406
(please PRINT)
Address 355 Research Parkway Town Meriden Zip 06450
3. Site Location Eastbrook Mall
4. Reference any approved map(s) that would be superseded if this request is approved:
Notations on wall types on Sheets PR-1, PR-2, and PR-3

5. Reference any new map(s) submitted as part of this request:

6. Itemize and describe the modification(s) being requested, using separate sheet where necessary. The description must be adequate to determine compliance with all applicable land use regulations: -
See attached



Applicant's signature

date 8/17/12

(over)

6. The approved drawings included a large cut retaining wall which was specified as Evergreen Wall. The wall was specified because it was a wall that allowed for a plant-able face with irrigation that did not require excessive over excavation. Site logistics required the wall to be constructed near the property line and standard Concrete Masonry Wall Units (CMU) which require geogrid reinforcement for structural adequacy would have required temporary excavation beyond the property line.

The contractor provided geotechnical testing of the soils and worked with an alternate wall supplier and the geotechnical engineer is able to provide a different wall type that will not require temporary or permanent excavation beyond the property as proposed.

This system contains units larger than conventional CMU walls and is a hybrid between a gravity wall and a geogrid reinforced wall. As such the wall designer can design the wall using safe excavation and work practices without encroachment.

The advantages of using this wall in lieu of the wall presented are

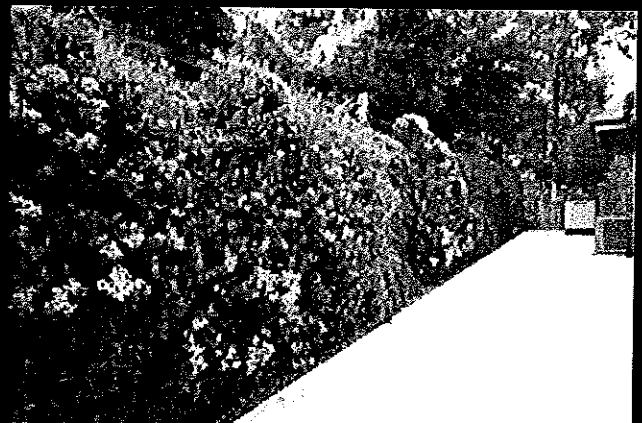
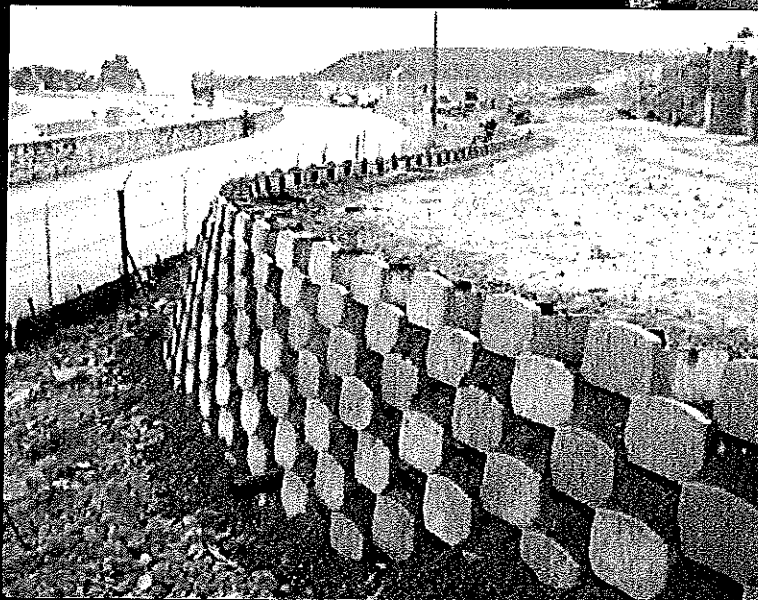
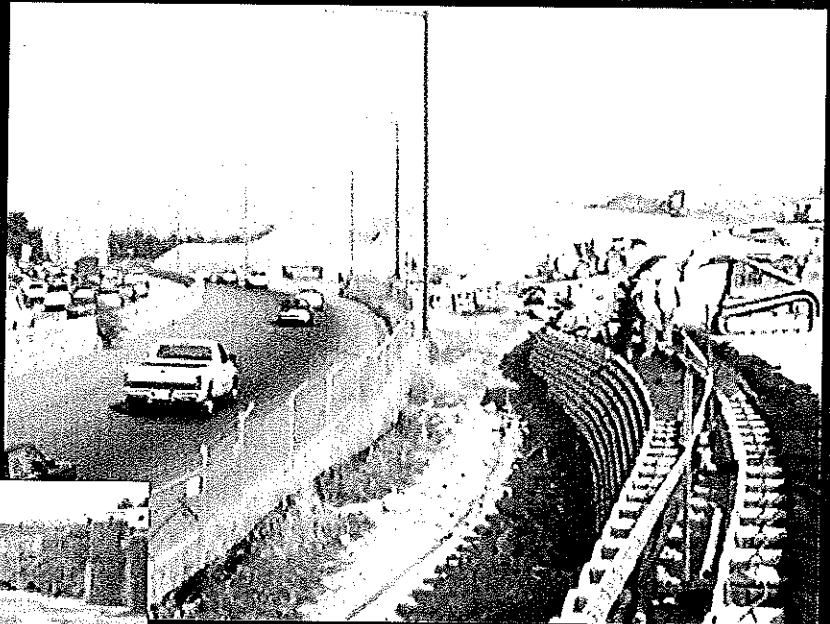
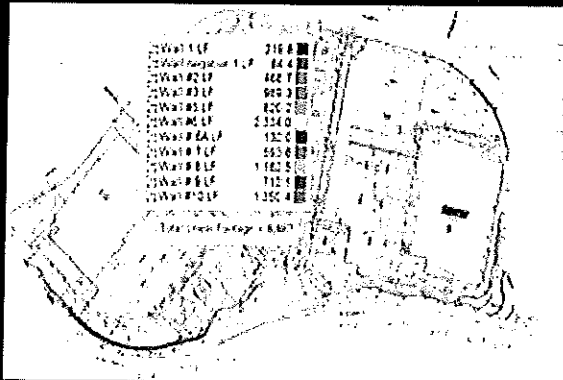
- The species, size and quantity of plantings will remain the same.
- The smaller unit face width of the wall units will allow for a smoother more aesthetic curve
- The tiered planting arrangement will provide less continuous visible concrete surface. It will better resemble a natural grade change.
- The new wall design will be submitted with structural design calculations certified by a CT engineer if the wall is acceptable to the commission.
- The planting areas will have more contact with the soils to the rear and be less susceptible to burn out or drying due to exposed concrete in the sun.

Engineering wise we have no reason to reject the wall being presented. It is our opinion that the only difference will be the aesthetics of the wall face. The smoother curves and less vertically aligned planting areas should create a more natural feel.

The applicant has supplied electronic copies of a brochure and photographs of this type of wall.

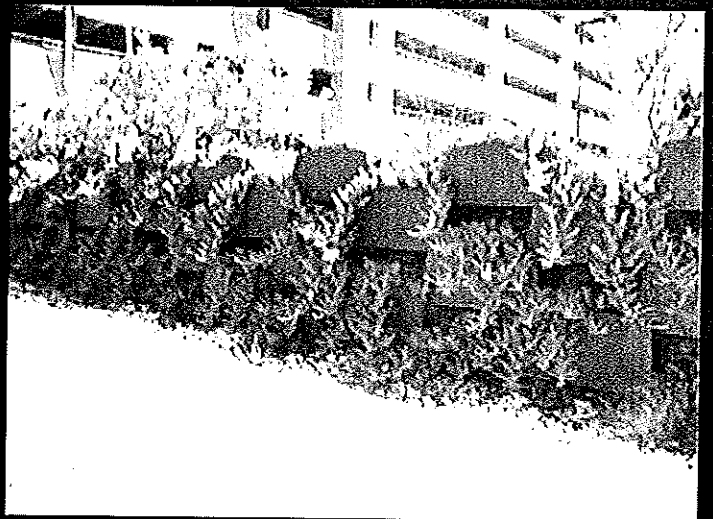


SmartSlope used as a Storm Water management device @ The Shops at Dakota Crossing



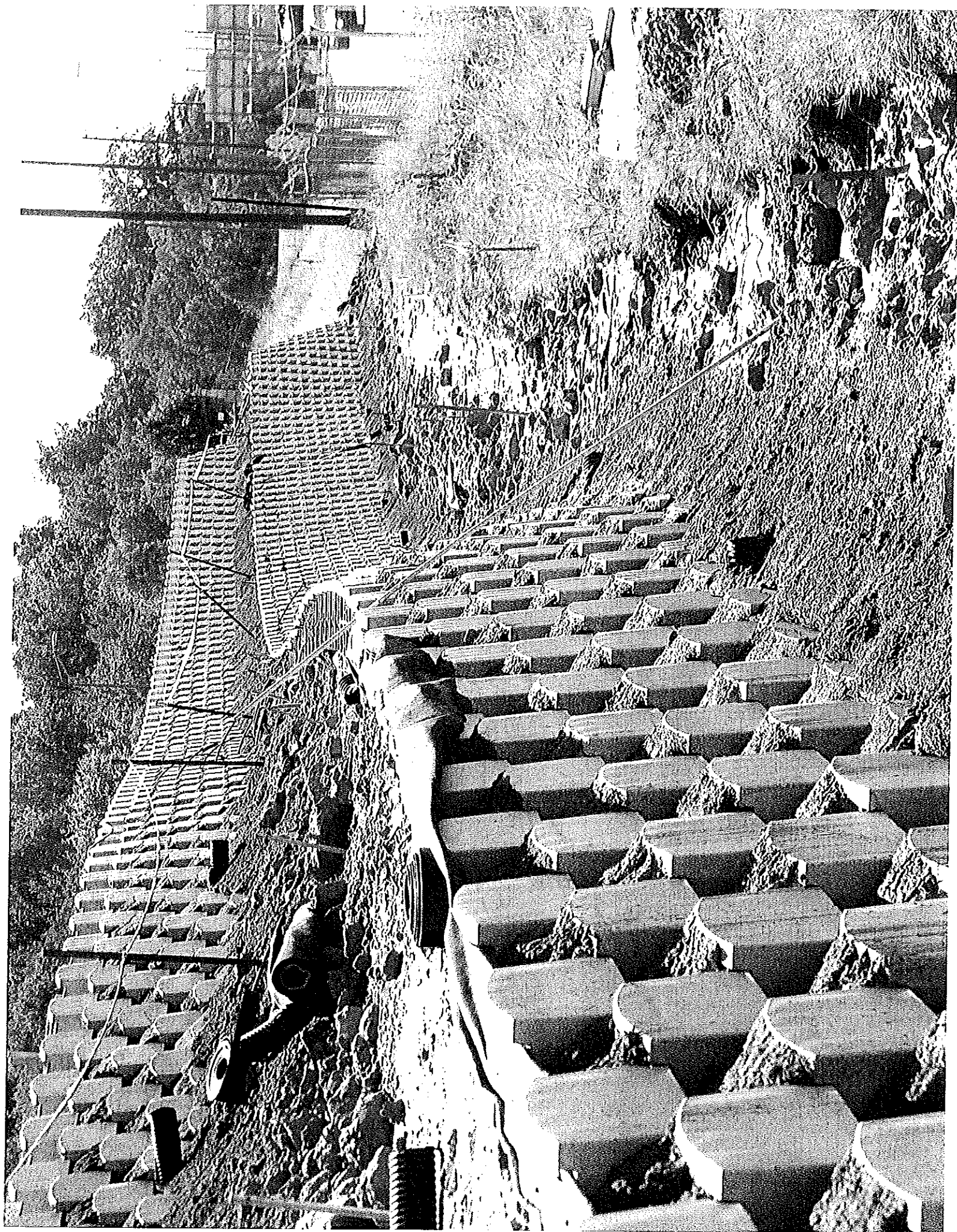
In Washington, D. C., the Shops @ Dakota Crossing is a mix use development along the Anacostia River. In the retail section of this development there is a need for 10+ retaining walls; the engineers and designers also had the task of managing the storm water on site with clay soils and a large amount of impervious surface associated with roof tops and parking lots of any retail center. An incredibly unique approach of evapotranspiration is being used, by utilizing approximately 63,000 linear feet of drip irrigation connected to captured storm water in several cisterns and running the drip irrigation through close to 55,000 sf of SmartSlope living retaining walls. Approximately 26,000 gallons per day will be evaporated into the atmosphere or utilized by the plants. SmartSlope's "rain garden" soil is being used for the media in the modules.

Commercial Projects



SmartSlope utilizes nature to create high functioning
and aesthetically pleasing retaining walls.

www.smartslope.com



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Approved



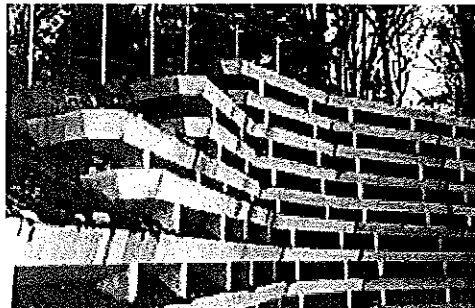
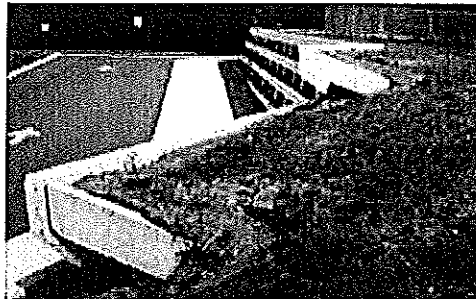
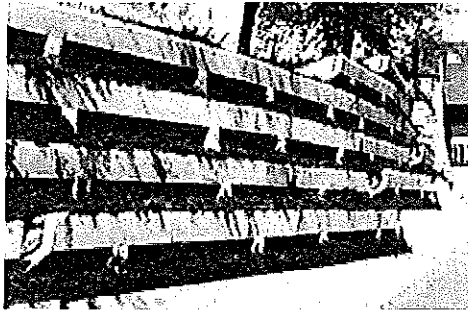
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NEW!

Reinforced Concrete Pipe
Download Drawings



Retaining Wall Systems

The EVERGREEN wall is composed of prefabricated element stacked on top each other. The crib wall container thus formed is filled with earth and planted. Combinations of elements of different dimensions permit foundation of resets and niches in the wall. The shape of the front profile optimizes growth opportunity for the plants which assures complete integration of the structure into its environment. Planted EVERGREEN walls are attractive green slopes in summer, with vegetation hiding the concrete and reducing noise levels. The resets and niches give accumulated winter snows interesting three dimensional structures. With EVERGREEN, the problem of graffiti is virtually eliminated and use of evergreen plants will keep the wall green year round.

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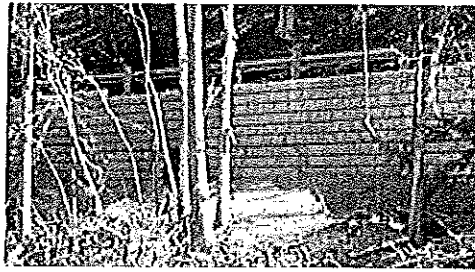
Installation

EVERGREEN - simple to install. One machine can do all the work; excavation, erection, fill and backfill. The speed of execution permits opening steep cuts temporarily. A hydraulic excavator can place elements (representing 40 square feet of wall surface) quickly and efficiently.

Characteristics of Completed Wall

Structural & Mechanical Qualities: The EVERGREEN wall is a gravity wall consisting of precast concrete crib like elements and earth fill.

Acoustical Qualities: The EVERGREEN wall has many pockets, resets, recesses and plantings to absorb noise and



reduce noise reflections.

Long Term Stability & Safety:

The quality of prefabricated concrete elements withstand weathering conditions and assures safety of the structure for long term use.

Variety of Applications:

Retaining walls, rock revetments, slope stabilizers and noise abating walls. This unique planted wall makes it especially suitable for areas subject to graffiti. Ideal for parks, gardens, residential and commercial districts, and along highways and railroads.

General Specifications

Materials: Elements are made of reinforced concrete according to state specifications.

Fabrication & Erection: The concrete elements are prefabricated in a factory under controlled conditions. The erection of the walls consists of simple stacking of elements beside and on top of one another.

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RECEIPT OF APPLICATION FOR A SPECIAL PERMIT:

_____, move and _____ seconds to receive the

Special Permit application (file #1313)

submitted by Christopher Kueffner and Lynn Stoddard

for a Seasonal Aerial Forest Ropes Course

on property located at West of Baxter Road on Storrs Road

as shown on plans dated 9-25-12

as shown and described in application submissions, and to refer said application to staff and committees, for review and comments and to set a Public Hearing for 11-5-12.

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SPECIAL PERMIT APPLICATION
(see Article V, Section B of the Zoning Regulations)

Mansfield Planning and Zoning Commission

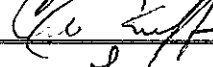
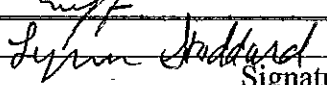
File # 1313
Date 9-27-12

1. Name of development (where applicable) Seasonal Aerial Forest Ropes Course
2. Proposed use of the property is seasonal recreational use
in accordance with Sec.(s) G of Article VII (Permitted Use provisions) of the Zoning Regulations


3. Address/location of subject property: Route 195, Storrs, CT (no street number yet)
Assessor's Map 7 Block 11 Lot(s) 18-1 Vol. 558 Page 461

4. Zone of subject property RAR-90 Acreage of subject property approx 118 acres

5. Acreage of adjacent land in same ownership (if any) 1 acre

6. APPLICANT Christopher Kueffner 
Lynn Stoddard 
(please PRINT) Signature
Street Address 192 Ravine Rd Telephone 860-481-0544
Town Storrs Zip Code 06268

Interest in property: Owner X Optionee _____ Lessee _____ Other _____
(If "Other", please explain) _____

7. OWNER OF RECORD: Christopher Kueffner 
(please PRINT) Signature
(OR attached Purchase Contract _____ OR attached letter consenting to application _____)

Street Address 192 Ravine Rd Telephone 860-429-8829
Town Storrs Zip Code 06268

8. AGENTS (if any) representing the applicant who may be directly contacted regarding this application:

Name Craig M. Lapinski, PE Telephone 860-646-2469
Address Fuss & O'Neill, 146 Hartford Road, Manchester, CT Zip Code 06040
Involvement (legal, engineering, surveying, etc.) maps, site plans, wetlands, engineering, etc.

(over)

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Special Permit Application
Inland Wetlands License Application
Seasonal Aerial Forest Ropes Course
Kueffner/Stoddard, Route 195, Storrs, CT

September 2012

STATEMENT OF USE

The proposed use is a seasonal recreational and educational high ropes challenge course on approximately 10 acres of forest land with frontage on Route 195. This aerial forest park will provide a range of ropes courses running from tree to tree that challenge visitors physically and mentally. It is an engaging, outdoor, friend-and-family-centered recreational activity that builds self-esteem and health.

The park will be designed to connect people with nature and teach and model good forest stewardship. The park layout and design will be very low impact, informed by the natural landscape and topography, preserving native trees and vegetation and existing stone walls. The tree-to-tree aerial bridges, or elements, will be raised and placed without heavy machinery and then secured without drilling into the trees. There will be interpretive signs to teach visitors about forest ecology and there will be no permanent buildings.

Our goals are to provide a wholesome healthy outdoor recreational experience, promote an appreciation for the forest while helping preserve it, and offer a community amenity that highlights Mansfield's natural landscape and community vision. The gravel parking area that will support the ropes course will be as low impact as possible. It has been designed to minimize grading and site disturbance and preserve notable healthy trees. The parking area will be surfaced with permeable gravel to foster stormwater infiltration. Bio-swales will accommodate heavier rains and flow.

The proposed seasonal aerial forest park use is consistent with the *Mansfield Plan of Conservation and Development* in that it will help "conserve and preserve Mansfield's natural, historic, agricultural and scenic resources...." At the same time, we are seeking to actively engage people with the forest by climbing and playing in the trees, fostering a "hands on" understanding and appreciation of nature. As such, this part of the forest will evolve from a passive, scenic community landscape to a vibrant community amenity that directly connects people with nature and models forest stewardship, while preserving the scenic value.

In addition, the proposed seasonal aerial forest park aligns well with the community values and vision, specifically, the strategic plan for *Mansfield 2020: A Unified Vision*. The aerial park embodies the following elements of the Unified Vision Statement by:

- Creating a design and use that embodies principles of sustainability and provides a unique attraction for residents and visitors, contributing to vibrant economic development for Mansfield: *"Principles of sustainability guide zoning and development, preserving the town's historic character and providing for economic vitality."*
- Offering *"residents and the region unique cultural, recreational and educational opportunities."* The ropes course and trails will feature educational signage and help children and adults learn about forest ecology.
- Maintaining and contributing to Mansfield's reputation and rural character: *"known for its excellent public schools, community-wide events, inclusive and efficient government, working farms and protected open spaces..."* This recreational use will enable the preservation of a productive, healthy forest.
- Creating a family-oriented, healthy playground in the trees that makes Mansfield *"a great place to live, work, and play."*
- The park will *promote health, fitness, and well-being and enhance the quality of life*, in keeping with the Priority Vision Point for Recreation, Health, and Wellness.

INLAND WETLANDS LICENSE APPLICATION

Inland wetlands have been mapped on the accompanying Site Plan. This application serves as both the special permit application and the concurrent inland wetlands license application. Wetlands and watercourses were delineated on December 14, 2011 at the site by Joshua Wilson, PWS (#1992) of Fuss & O'Neill, Inc. Wetlands and watercourses were delineated (identified, classified, and flagged at approximately 50-foot intervals) in accordance with State of Connecticut Inland Wetland and Watercourses Act (CGS §§ 22a-36 to 22a-42 inclusive). In addition, Federal jurisdictional wetlands and watercourses were delineated in accordance with the prescribed methodology of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers'

1987 Wetland Delineation Manual (Technical Report Y-87-1) and the *Interim Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Northcentral and Northeast Region* (ERDC/EL TR-09-19). The Wetlands Delineation Report is attached.

As stated in the Wetlands Delineation Report, the wetlands on site provide low to moderate functions and values. All three wetlands are groundwater fed. The northwestern most wetland has formed in the remnants of borrow pit and receives a steady flow of groundwater. The wetlands along Route 195 receive seasonal groundwater discharge from the southern uplands as well as runoff from Route 195. In the Spring of 2012, Fuss & O'Neill inspected all three wetlands areas to determine if they supported obligate vernal pool species. Direct observations and dip netting of the wetlands yielded no evidence that they support obligate vernal pool species. Therefore, it was determined that these wetlands are not classified as vernal pools. In addition to groundwater discharge, the wetlands also provide some sediment and toxicant retention (from Route 195) as well as nutrient removal/renovation and production export (from upland and wetland forested) areas.

The proposed gravel parking lot will alter the existing condition at the site. However, this impact is minimized to the maximum extent by the relatively low impact natural design, the use of permeable surface materials, and the construction of the bioswales for stormwater treatment. Because of these design factors and the preservation the majority of the forest cover across the site, the alterations to the site will not adversely impact or diminish the quality or quantity of water that is necessary to support and maintain existing functions and values of the wetlands or watercourses on or adjacent to the site.

FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN AND STEWARDSHIP

Our goal is preservation and sustainable use of this forest land. In 2011, through assistance from the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Mark Tremblay of Land Management Services worked with us to develop a Forest Management Plan for this nearly 119-acre parcel. The forest cover is predominantly mixed upland oaks, with scarlet, black, Northern red, and white oaks. As stated in our Forest Management Plan, our primary goals and objectives for the parcel include:

- Protection of natural resources, wildlife habitats, and aesthetic values of the property
- Improvement of the agricultural and forest health values of the land
- Improvement of access in portions of the property to facilitate management and recreational activities
- Utilization of the land for educational purposes
- Management of the oak timber resource to provide a sustainable supply of firewood

Our Forest Management Plan conservation practices for this northern portion of the site, which is mixed hardwood/pine and mixed oaks, calls for forest stand improvement and brush management to protect native plant health, improve habitat values, and improve forest health. A copy of the Conservation Practices aerial photo/map is attached. The proposed use is consistent with and will help implement our Plan through forest stand thinning, brush management and removal of invasives. We have surveyed and mapped healthy trees that will be preserved and showcased in the parking area, trails, and ropes courses.

DETAILS OF THE NATURE AND INTENSITY OF THE PROPOSED USE

Since our goal is preservation and sustainable use of this forest land, the aerial park will be designed, constructed, and operated to preserve high quality trees, maintain the natural environment, blend the park features into the natural contours and forest landscape, and provide a model for forest stewardship that invites people to actively and respectfully interact with the forest. From the low impact design of the parking area to staff training to the design of the ropes courses themselves, we will stress appreciation for, and preservation of, the forest.

The major components of the proposed seasonal recreational use include the following, all of which are detailed below: aerial park location and design, low-impact entrance driveway and parking area, support amenities, and public education and health features. The park will provide unique experiences for all visitors. The more active visitor will enjoy the challenge of an aerial trek through ropes courses and glide along zip lines high up in the trees. Other visitors may enjoy observing the climbers and walk the paths beneath, learning about forests and enjoying time in the open outdoors.

Aerial Park Location and Design

The Site Plan shows the general area of the ropes courses. Typical plans for a ropes course, tree platform, and starting platform are attached. These plans illustrate the conceptual design. The exact placement of the courses and platforms within this area will be based on further analysis of individual tree health and vigor.

As our priorities include forest health along side visitor enjoyment and safety, the course design, installation, and operation demand numerous considerations.

- Arborists and foresters will be consulted on the removal of dead and dying trees and limbs and advise on the design of the courses, with goals of preserving and promoting the health and integrity of the forest and visitor safety.
- The aerial park will meet the standards for Challenge Course and Aerial Adventure Course installation, operation, and inspection, as set by the Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT).
- The starting platform is the starting point for all of the courses. It is a wooden platform accessed by a broad entry ladder. The entry ladder is raised when the park is closed to restrict access to the courses.
- A number of courses, each consisting of approximately 10 tree-to-tree bridges or "elements," are accessed from the starting platform. An element is typically a kind of obstacle constructed of logs, planks, barrels, swings, nets, etc. suspended between trees. Once leaving the starting platform, climbers traverse from one element to the next by way of 4 foot by 4 foot tree platforms.
- Courses are rated like ski trails and range from yellow (easiest) to double black diamond (most difficult). Visitors must prove themselves able before attempting a more difficult course.
- To protect the trees, no holes are drilled. Instead, platforms are secured with wedges and the elements are attached with cables wrapped around protective blocking surrounding the trunks.
- To minimize impact on the tree root systems and soils, as well as the understory generally, the construction and installation of the elements and platforms is done manually, without heavy equipment.
- While on the course, each climber wears a safety harness equipped with two lanyard clips and a zip-line pulley. Climbers must keep the two lanyards clipped onto the lines at all times--except when transferring between an element and a platform. State-of-the-art lanyard clips will make it impossible for both clips to be detached at the same time, ensuring safety; climbers will always be clipped in.
- There will be benches and wood-chip-covered walking paths beneath parts of the ropes course area, enabling staff and visitors to access the courses from below and watch the climbers. With the exception of the removal of invasive plants, the natural understory will be preserved.
- Our partners have extensive experience and have designed and constructed 8 aerial forest parks in the past four years.

Low Impact Entrance Driveway and Parking Area

Parking lots can be jarring and unattractive. Against that stereotype, we wish to set a different tone as soon as people arrive--a sense of being in the woods. The entrance driveway and parking area have been designed in a way that respects the natural contours of the land and minimize grading and fill. The parking area enjoys a natural, non-engineered look and feel that sets the tone for a nature experience and preserves and showcases large trees.

- The entrance driveway and parking area use low impact design principles and occupy only 1.25 acres of the site at full build-out.
- The wetland crossing occurs at the area of least possible impact in order to minimize necessary fill and to maintain the existing conditions as much as possible given road-width requirements.
- The parking surface will be gravel, allowing for infiltration of rainwater while providing durability. Bioswales will be created to absorb and filter stormwater.
- The entrance driveway has been sited and designed to minimize wetlands impact and will result in 580 square feet of direct wetland disturbance.
- The full parking area has been designed for up to 85 cars, including required handicapped-accessible spaces.
- To further minimize environmental impact, we will construct the parking area in phases. As this is an entirely new use in this area, the ability to phase in--or not--will reduce possibly unnecessary site disturbance. The first phase will accommodate approximately 50 parking spaces, including accessible parking spaces to meet state code requirements. The Site Plan shows a total of 85 spaces, which will only be built if needed.

Support Amenities

The aerial forest park will require temporary seasonal facilities for ticket sales, storage, and visitor convenience.

- The Site Plan shows areas for temporary seasonal ticket shed and office. These will be temporary sheds placed on a leveled pad with no footings in the ground.
- Utilities (electricity and cable/phone) will be installed to service the leveled pad.
- Simple benches and picnic tables will be situated in the ropes course area; some of which may be built with wood from the site.
- Site Plan indicates the location of portable toilets. They will be on-site seasonally.
- Recycling and refuse containers will be located in the most active areas of the park.
- Bike racks will be provided and we plan to work with the town and community members to develop safe bike-ways from UConn and other areas to the park.
- Staff will be required to complete CPR training and a 3-day on-site training course that enables them to perform assists and rescues when needed, provide safety briefings, and teach visitors how to properly traverse the courses and use the equipment.

Public Education and Health Features

Public Education is part of our mission. Most visitors will come to challenge themselves on the courses. However, some visitors will not be able to climb or won't be interested in it. We see this as an additional opportunity.

- The proposed use will engage people in activities within the forest and will build an appreciation for Connecticut's forest land and the natural world.
- Interpretive/educational signs will teach visitors about tree identification, forest ecology, and forest management, for example.
- Forest tours--led by professionals and DEEP extension staff--based on showing forest management practices, have been hosted or are scheduled on the entire 118-acre parcel to help neighbors and others learn about sound forest management practices and opportunities.
- Ropes courses help build self-esteem and promote physical fitness. This aerial forest park will offer our community healthy fun exercise--an important tool in the fight against obesity.
- The park will provide a family-focused activity for all ages and abilities -- from walking paths and observing others to high ropes courses of increasing levels of difficulty.
- We will explore the potential to connect the park and trails on this forestland with Mansfield's extensive hiking trail network.

SITE PLAN

The attached Site Plans, which shows the locations for the proposed parking area, the temporary ticket and equipment storage sheds, portable sanitary facilities, and the general location of the ropes courses.

SANITATION REPORT

The proposed seasonal recreational use does not include any permanent buildings and there will be no drilled well or water service. Consequently, there is no need for water supply and waste disposal or a sanitation report. We will contract with a vendor to provide portable sanitary toilets for use by staff and visitors. The portable toilets will be serviced routinely and removed when the park is not open (winter). Over the first season, we project approximately 100 visitors/day. Based on recommendations from industry experts, we will contract for the appropriate number of portable toilets to comfortably service 100 visitors for a 10-hour "event." We will adjust the number of toilets as required as visitation changes. As part of our contract, we will require the portable toilet vendor to comply with all local and state Health Department requirements and require routine servicing to ensure cleanliness and a positive visitor experience.

EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL PLAN

The Erosion and Sediment Control Plan that will minimize erosion during the construction of the parking area. An erosion and sediment control plan has been developed in accordance with the 2002 Connecticut Guidelines for Soil Erosion

and Sediment Control (see Sheet CE101 of the site plans).

CONSISTENCY OF PROPOSED USE WITH SITE PLAN AND SPECIAL PERMIT CRITERIA

1. Complete Application: All necessary information has been provided for the commission to determine compliance with the Mansfield Zoning Regulations, including: Statement of Use and application narrative, site plan map, wetlands delineation, grading plan, sediment and erosion control plan, etc.
2. Permitted Use: Proposed use is consistent with the Mansfield Zoning Regulations.
 - a. The proposed seasonal aerial forest ropes course is a "recreational use" which is allowed in this RAR-90 zone by special permit. In further compliance with Article VII, Section G.10, the subject property is on an arterial street, Route 195.
 - b. The proposed use is consistent with all other applicable sections of the Mansfield Zoning Regulations and meets the requirements for parking, landscaping and buffering, set back requirements, and signs.
 - c. The proposed use does not include any prohibited uses listed in Article VI, Section A. We have discussed the proposed use with the following relevant staff and incorporated their input into the planning and design of the facility: Director of Planning, Director of the Department of Building and Housing Inspection, Eastern Highlands Health District Sanitarian, Assistant Chief Fire Marshal, Mansfield Resident State Trooper's office, and the CT Department of Transportation.
3. Air/Noise Pollution: The proposed use is seasonal, recreational, and very low impact. It will not generate any air pollution, odor, noise, vibrations, electrical disturbances, radiation/radio-activity, fire or explosive hazards, or other activities listed in Article VI, B.4
4. Waste: There will be no generation or storage of hazardous materials and no liquid or solid discharges. The proposed use does not involve food preparation operations, water supply or waste disposal systems. Almost no waste will be generated on site. Containers for recyclables and refuse will be provided and serviced regularly.
5. Flooding: The site is not subject to flooding and there will be no permanent buildings. The proposed activity is not on or within 500 feet of an identified aquifer area and the proposed seasonal recreational use and low-impact parking area with accompanying bioswales are designed to protect and preserve the forestland.
6. Energy Use: Energy use will be minimal. Computers and task lighting in the temporary seasonal ticket and equipment storage shed will be highly efficient and meet or exceed EPA's Energy Star standards.
7. Parking: The parking area has been adequately sized, based on visitor projections. The parking area will provide 84 parking spaces, including 4 handicap-accessible spaces at full build out.
8. Road and Drainage: The driveway and parking area have been designed to promote vehicular and pedestrian safety and maximize stormwater infiltration. In addition, bioswales have been designed to provide stormwater treatment of excess runoff from the gravel lot.
9. Landscaping: Our intention is to leave things as nature would have them without us. Apart from the removal of non-native invasives, the removal of some dead or unsound branches and trees for safety (both standing and fallen) within the area of the aerial park, and establishing some wood chip paths to and within the park, there will be minimal landscaping. Wherever possible, the recreational use of the site will preserve and maintain the existing natural vegetation of the forest to a significant degree and will not require formal landscaping and buffers. We have surveyed and marked the "medium" and larger existing healthy trees in the proposed parking area and designed the parking area around them. In the ropes course area, trees will also be preserved and integrated into the courses, focusing on the removal of dead and dying trees and limbs. We will also preserve existing stone wall remnants on the site and highlight one that will form a "natural" boundary between the ticketing area and the active ropes course area.
10. Erosion and Sediment Control: As provided on Sheet CE 101 of the site plans, the proposed work complies with the erosion and sedimentation control/site development principles listed in Article VI, Section B.4.r and B.4.s. Specifically, an erosion and sediment control plan has been developed in accordance with the 2002 Connecticut Guidelines for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control.
11. Signs: As noted on the site plan, there will be one 4' X 8' or smaller identity sign, per town regulations, south of the driveway entrance on Route 195. A proposed sign location has been identified that will not block visibility and sight lines for motorists. The sign placement will require CT DOT approval for placement in the Route 195 Right of Way (which will be part of the DOT Encroachment Permit application) and subsequent approval by Mansfield Planning & Zoning Commission. The exact location for the sign will be determined as we work with DOT to optimize sight lines and safety. The sign will be made from a tree cross-section and/or natural-edged planks, in keeping with the character of the forestland and the forest aerial ropes course. The attached Identity Sign Plan shows the conceptual design and dimensions of the sign. The final name of the ropes course is to be determined.
12. Setbacks: The site lot frontage on Route 195 is approximately 678 feet, well in excess of the 200 foot minimum lot frontage. The parking area meets the minimum front setback of 60 feet. The aerial ropes course will be set back some 300 feet or more, and will be within the side setback of 35 feet from neighboring property lines.

13. Bonding requirements: We anticipate no bonding requirements for this proposed seasonal recreational use and limited development of the gravel parking area.
14. Sand and gravel: There is no plan to remove sand or gravel, except if necessary to accomplish any minimal grading required to construct the parking area as shown on the Grading Plan in the attached site plans.
15. Sale of Alcohol: There will be no sale of alcoholic liquor.
16. Designated Development District: The site is not in a Designated Development District.
17. Local, State, and Federal Requirements: We have complied with all applicable local, state, and federal requirements:
 - a. This application serves as a concurrent application for Inland Wetland Agency (IWA) license and Planning & Zoning Commission special permit. The entrance drive and parking area include direct disturbance to wetlands and activity within the 100-foot upland review area. The entrance will have 580 square feet of direct wetland impacts. The proposed parking area includes 41,900 square feet of activity within the regulated upland review area. Beyond these regulatory activities, the proposed recreation use is entirely within upland areas of the site, involves no fill or excavation, and, therefore, is exempt from wetland regulations.
 - b. After all local approvals and prior to commencing work, we will submit a "Category 1 Certification Form" to the US Army Corps of Engineers and the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, and comply with all state and federal wetlands requirements.
 - c. After obtaining local approvals, we will submit an Encroachment Permit application to the Connecticut Department of Transportation and comply with all requirements for the proposed entrance driveway. An intersection and site distance analysis (attached) was conducted for the proposed entrance by Fuss & O'Neill in September 2011. It was determined that the proposed location of the entrance will provide more than adequate sight distances, safe egress for vehicles turning left, and better visibility for drivers approaching the site.
18. Water Supply, Safety, etc: The proposed seasonal use does not require water supply and will rely on sanitary portable toilets when the course is open. The site provides for fire and emergency access and has been designed to protect the natural environment and foster a broader understanding and appreciation for environmental stewardship. We have discussed safety and security measures with professionals in the Fire Marshall's office and the Mansfield Resident Trooper's Office. As a result of these meetings and conversations, we have already or will take the following precautionary actions to enhance security:
 - a. Post "No Trespassing" signs when the park is not open to justify police action if needed.
 - b. Ensure the parking lot design and layout sufficiently accommodates safety vehicles.
 - c. Install a heavy-duty lockable gate at the driveway entrance to prevent vehicle access when the park is closed.
 - d. Minimize "attractive nuisances" (i.e., things that can be broken or stolen) within the park, by using heavy-duty materials.
 - e. Establish strong communications with the Mansfield Resident Trooper's Office to prevent and immediately act upon any criminal mischief.
19. Vehicle, Pedestrian, Handicapped Access: Vehicular and pedestrian access to and from the property and internal traffic patterns have been designed to maximize safety and avoid hazards and congestion. The parking area is curved to respect the natural contours of the site, provide a more aesthetic look that sets the tone for an experience in nature, allow for the preservation of significant and beautiful trees around the parking area, and promote traffic calming. In addition, we will minimize impact by building only 53 parking spaces initially (phase 1) and expand up to 84 spaces (phase 2), if needed, to avoid congestion and maximize safety. In accordance with state code, four (4) handicapped accessible spaces will be provided during phase 1. Bicycle racks will be provided to encourage biking to the course as a healthy and environmentally sustainable transportation mode. We are eager to work with the Town and UConn to develop safe bicycle access along Route 195 and connect with other bikeways in town.
20. Grading and Storm Drainage: By utilizing the least sloped areas of the site for parking and by surfacing the parking and travel areas with pervious gravel, we seek to minimize storm runoff and maximize natural infiltration and storm-water filtering. As recommended by town staff, we will be creating bioswales adjacent to the lower (northern) side of the parking area to further minimize storm runoff and provide treatment. See attached Stormwater Management Report.
21. Nuisances: The proposed recreational use will not create noise other than the sounds of people laughing and having fun during daylight hours seasonally. The park will be open seasonally during daylight hours so there will be no outdoor lighting.
22. Construction Traffic: There will be very minimal construction traffic and neighborhood impact. Construction vehicles will be needed to grade and install gravel for the entrance driveway and parking area. These vehicles will enter from Route 195 and traffic will be insignificant. Construction of the ropes course will be done manually -- using no vehicles or cranes in the forest area, just ladders and hand tools.
23. Harmony with Surrounding Character: From the entrance drive and parking area to the ropes course, the focus of this recreational area is on the forest and trees and has been designed to be in harmony with this beautiful forest and natural area. The non-invasive parking area curves around trees, in deference to nature, setting the tone for the forest park

experience. Whether the visitor observes ropes course climbers from the ground, or participates actively on the ropes course up in the trees, there is an engaging outdoor activity for each visitor--young and old--and of all physical abilities. Our intent is to create and provide a healthy, wholesome, well-loved community amenity that compliments the character of our rural landscape and draws visitors to Mansfield as a recreational destination while visiting our university and patronizing businesses in our new downtown.

24. **Neighborhood Notification:** We will notify in writing all property owners within 500 feet of the perimeter of the property boundaries of this site of this special permit application. We will send such notice on the Neighborhood Notification Form by certified mail at least 10 days prior to the date of the public hearing scheduled by the Commission. We will provide a copy of this notice and a listing of property owners notified to the Mansfield Planning Office at least 5 days prior to the public hearing.
25. **Compatibility with Mansfield's Plan of Development and Article I of the Mansfield Zoning Regulations:** This project aligns significantly with Mansfield's Plan of Conservation and Development. In terms of the first policy goal, it represents a balancing force in terms of development. As agritourism, it represents a potentially economically viable way to support open space. It's success will help preserve open space, forestland, and agriculture. It will not draw on the town's infrastructure to any significant degree, and yet it could help support it by providing a bicycling, and possibly even a public transportation, destination. It also moves the town toward its second policy goal. This project is in and of itself an effort to preserve and conserve. Its success will help preserve Mansfield's natural resources, it's surface and groundwater quality, interior forest areas, and at least one undeveloped hilltop. While it may do little with respect to housing (goal three), we envision that it will further the fourth goal, that of strengthening and encouraging a further sense of neighborhood and community throughout Mansfield. We believe that this proposed use concurs in numerous ways with the statutory responsibilities and purposes noted in Article I of the Mansfield Zoning Regulations. Notes and excerpts follow regarding each of the purposes as listed in Article 1 of the Mansfield Zoning Regulations.)
 - a. As it will be accessible to the general public and it gets people outdoors and is an activity that calls for mental and physical engagement, it will necessarily "promote and protect the overall health, ... and welfare of the residents of Mansfield, Connecticut and the general public;"
 - b. By helping to preserve and conserve a large tract of forested land, it will "... provide for and facilitate the orderly growth and expansion of the municipality, thereby preventing an undue concentration of population and an overcrowding of the land...;"
 - c. Given that one of our the goals is to--in every extent possible--maintain the aesthetic and natural values of the site, we have specifically sought "To protect the character" of the property and thus "... maintain the stability and property values of residential, business and industrial areas within the Town, including areas and properties of historic value;" In fact, we believe that this new community amenity has the potential to *increase* property values.
 - d. Once again, our own goals match the purpose stated as: "To provide for the protection of the physical environment, including air quality, potential surface and ground drinking water supplies, and specific environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands and watercourses and areas subject to flooding and/or erosion and sedimentation problems;" and we have done what seems prudent and necessary to accomplish this joint objective by designing thoughtfully and in accordance with sustainability principles.
 - e. With the help of traffic consultants, we have proposed an access point to Route 195 that provides both a very safe entry and exit for cars and bicycle traffic. Further, within the site, we have pursued a non-linear parking area design that we believe will calm traffic and "...encourage safe and efficient vehicular and pedestrian facilities and circulation patterns and thereby avoid traffic hazards and congestion;"
 - f. With the exception of being considered a protection against flooding, (it being undeveloped forest land),--our use, including our porous parking lot, may not specifically "... provide protection against fire, flood, explosion, hazardous materials and other, potential dangers ..." but we are confident that it will only very insignificantly increase the regional or local threat of any of these.
 - g. Because this proposed use is all about trees, it is necessarily all about solar power. While we may at some point endeavor to power our temporary ticket and storage shed with solar panels, we intend let the trees get the best light first. The activity and use we are proposing gets people away from electronics and devices and into an environment that is naturally solar powered (photo-synthesis); so, indeed, the very enterprise itself is made possible by nothing other than "... the use of solar and other renewable forms of energy...;"
 - h. The "...aesthetic considerations in designing..." our parking area was our first preoccupation on the site. Even as providing parking is an unfortunate concession to current transportation realities, we have sought to fashion the parking area so as to consider the topography, the existing trees, the small area of wetland soils, all the while accommodating safety vehicles, and our desire to have it preserve and introduce an atmosphere of the woods and forest while attempting to make it as modest as possible. We have carried the same values with us when considering the color of the temporary ticket and storage shed, and even the placement and color of the portable toilets. We want nothing more than a project that is intimately "... compatible with the character of

the site and subject neighborhood, and promote[s] the value of properties in the neighborhood and the Town;" In fact, we would like our aesthetic to spill outwards into the neighborhood.

- i. Even as the zoning regulations already permit recreational uses in this zone, by its very nature, this proposed use--in part because of it's minimal on-site changes--comes very close to its current use, that of productive Connecticut forestland. But at the same time it increases its public value. Where purpose 9 of Article I suggests that the board should regulate "... with a view toward conserving the value of properties, encouraging a variety of housing and economic development opportunities, and encouraging compatible and appropriate uses of land within the various zones and throughout the town;" it would appear that this proposal is a perfect opportunity to act on that purpose.
- j. With a buffer of land and trees along what is already a busy and sometimes noisy road, the significant distance from neighboring residences, and considering the character of the proposed use, goal 10, "To protect residents from nuisances from sight and/or sound;" is both met and moot.

26. Location and size of the proposed use and the nature and intensity of use in relation to the size of the lot will be in harmony with the orderly development of the town and compatible with other existing uses: With the exception of the parking area, and the addition of people and some obstacles in the trees, the role of this piece of Mansfield will not change. The site location is noted on an accompanying map, but to be honest, it's along a nondescript and generally unnoticed stretch of route 195. It is represented by some 670 feet of frontage on the south side of 195, about a half-mile south of route 32. The property is forested, and excepting a meandering gravel parking lot in the woods and access to it, under the proposed use the site will remain forested. The site of the project itself is approximately 10 acres, or barely more than 8% of the entire parcel, which totals about 118 acres and extends about half-a-mile south to Forest Road.

The proposed use is for a seasonal recreational activity: an aerial forest challenge course. This will entail suspending "elements" or uniquely configured and challenging "bridges" between trees. Adventurous people will then seek to successfully traverse the aerial courses among and through the trees. The use will include a minimum network of paths below the aerial courses so that people not inclined to the challenge may vicariously enjoy the course, observe climbers, and simply experience the out of doors.

Is it compatible with other existing uses? Yes. In terms of the land and the forest itself, by and large, the proposed use is really the current use: a healthy, growing, Connecticut forest. It will simply now include people and some wire and wooden and rope bridges between trees. Were there no sign at the entrance, it would look about as it does today and you wouldn't know it was there.

27. Aesthetic Quality: Proper consideration to aesthetic quality, landscaping, natural features: Overall, we are seeking to maintain the existing aesthetic of the site and the property. For reasons of visitor safety, however, we will remove or fell dead branches and trees within the area of the courses. We have laid out a parking area that curves around and among trees we wanted to preserve and did our best not to fight the topography with fills or cuts. Our intention is to leave intact the small remnants of stone walls that exist and where we have paths, we will cover them with wood-chips harvested on-site. One feature we will include is interpretive signs so that visitors may benefit not just from being there and being out of doors, but learn about the natural features that surround them. The temporary ticket and storage shed will be painted to blend in and complement the surroundings and the discretely-placed portable toilets will be of a compatible color and likely shielded either by natural vegetation or other aesthetically appropriate means.



FUSS & O'NEILL

September 13, 2011

Ms. Lynn Stoddard
192 Ravine Road
Storrs, CT 06268-1503

Re: Intersection Sight Distance Analysis
Storrs Road Property, Mansfield, CT

Dear Ms. Stoddard:

Fuss & O'Neill has performed an intersection sight distance analysis per your request for your property located on the south side of Storrs Road (Route 195) in Mansfield, CT, approximately one quarter mile west of Baxter Road. This letter documents the findings of the sight distance analysis.

Intersection sight distance requirements are set forth by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) in the 2003 *Highway Design Manual*. These requirements are typically required to be met for any new driveway intersections with State roadways. Construction of a new driveway along Storrs Road will require grading and paving work within the State right-of-way, which will therefore require an Encroachment Permit from CTDOT. During the permit review process, the Department will verify that the proposed driveway is consistent with the required intersection sight distance criteria.

Intersection sight distance was measured at the proposed site driveway location, located approximately 450 feet east of Rockridge Road. Looking left (west), 860 feet of sight distance is available, while further sight distance is limited by the horizontal curve on Storrs Road. Looking right (east), 580 feet of sight distance is available. Further sight distance to the right is limited by the crest vertical curve in the roadway.

Required intersection sight distance is based on the 85th percentile design speed of the roadway. In order to determine speeds on Storrs Road, we utilized a radar gun to obtain 100 speed readings for vehicles traveling in the westbound direction. Speeds were measured only for free flowing vehicles, not including trailing vehicles in larger groups/platoons. This process indicated that the 85th percentile speed in the westbound direction is 55 miles per hour. Based on this speed, at least 610 feet of intersection sight distance is required, indicating that the proposed site driveway location provides insufficient sight distance for safe egress from the site.

We also reviewed other potential locations for a new driveway along the site frontage on Storrs Road. Shifting the driveway approximately 200 feet to the east will increase the sight distance looking to the right to approximately 900 feet, which comfortably exceeds the

146 Hartford Road
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06040
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Connecticut
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South Carolina



FUSS & O'NEILL

Ms. Lynn Stoddard
September 13, 2011
Page 2

CTDOT criteria. Sight distance looking to the left is also improved to approximately 950 feet. This location would provide safer egress for vehicles turning left out of the proposed facility. Furthermore, this alternate driveway location would provide significantly better visibility for drivers approaching the site, allowing them to see the sign and driveway earlier as they approach. Construction of a driveway at this location would not impact the existing utility pole locations nor the existing guiderail, however would have increased wetlands impacts compared to the first location.

Based on the above sight distance analysis, Fuss & O'Neill recommends that the driveway be installed at the alternate easterly location, providing for safer access for visitors and improved visibility to signage. It may however be possible to work with CTDOT in the hope that they will allow access at the westerly driveway location. Given that the intersection sight distance is within 30 feet of the criteria and the driveway will have low traffic volume, it may be possible to obtain approval for the westerly driveway location, should it be deemed infeasible to construct the easterly driveway.

Moving forward, we recommend that the wetlands be flagged in order to accurately identify the potential impacts related to each driveway alternative. That information will allow you to make an informed decision on which driveway alternative is most appropriate.

Please feel free to call us if you have any questions or comments regarding the information provided in this letter. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Patrick Baxter, PE
Senior Transportation Engineer

Reviewed by:

Mark Vertucci, PE, PTOE
Senior Project Manager



TOWN OF MANSFIELD
AUDREY P. BECK BUILDING
FOUR SOUTH EAGLEVILLE ROAD
STORRS, CONNECTICUT 06268



CURT B. HIRSCH
ZONING AGENT
(860) 429-3341

To: Planning & Zoning Commission
From: Curt Hirsch, Zoning Agent
Date: September 26, 2012

Re: Live Music Permit Renewals (PZC #895)

Huskies Restaurant, 28 King Hill Rd., (file #780-2)
Pub 32, 847 Stafford Rd., (file #595)
Ted's Restaurant, 16 King Hill Rd., (file #1107)


Special permits for the use of live music expire on November 1st of each year. There are three active permits for live music.

As we are running up against the expiration date I recommend that the PZC schedule a public hearing for November 5, 2012 to hear applications for the renewal of special permits for the use of live music and also extend the current permit period until November 20, 2012.

PAGE
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TOWN OF MANSFIELD
OFFICE OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

LINDA M. PAINTER, AICP, DIRECTOR

Memo to: Mansfield Planning and Zoning Commission
From: Linda M. Painter, AICP, Director of Planning and Development 
Date: September 27, 2012
Re: Request for Temporary Field Lighting, E.O. Smith High School, File #1117-2

Bruce Silva, Superintendent of Schools for Region 19, has requested approval from the Commission to allow E.O. Smith High School to host one annual evening football game each fall. The games would start at 6:30 p.m. and are expected to be over by 9:30 p.m. Temporary lighting in the form of ten, 32-foot fixtures would be used to illuminate the field for these events.

Recommendation

As the request does not involve the installation of any permanent fixtures and is specifically for a one-time event each year, there do not appear to be any significant impacts. Therefore, I recommend that the Planning and Zoning Commission adopt the following motion:

That the Planning and Zoning Commission hereby authorizes the use of temporary lights by E.O. Smith High School for one evening football game each year pursuant to the details provided in the letter from Superintendent Bruce Silva dated September 25, 2012.

September 25, 2012

Jo Ann Goodman, Chair
Planning and Zoning Commission
Audrey Beck Municipal Building
4 South Eagleville Road
Mansfield, Connecticut 06268

Dear Jo Ann,

This letter is written to request permission from the Mansfield Planning and Zoning Commission to allow E.O. Smith High School to host a night game each fall for football, girl's soccer or boy's soccer. You may recall that the commission approved a similar request last year.

The E.O. Smith Football Booster Club parents have initiated this request and offered to raise all of the funds needed to rent temporary lights for this year's game. The games will be scheduled to begin at 6:30 p.m. and can be expected to end at 9:30 p.m. The lighting will be rented specifically for this "special occasion" and will consist of ten 32' towers. It is the District's intention to try and host one evening game each fall.

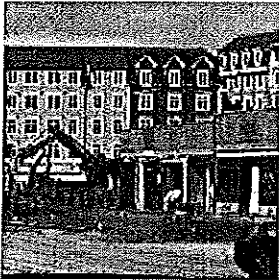
I would be happy to provide the commission with any other information that is needed pertaining to this request. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Bruce W. Silva

BWS/

c. Linda Painter, Director
James Mark, Chairman



September 24th, 2012

For more on Storrs Center, visit:

- [Storrs Center web site](#)
- [Mansfield downtown Partnership web site](#) (you can also access key planning documents from here)

Postings from the Southern New England APA Conference:

- [Anchoring a Neighborhood](#)
- [We Don't Let Planning Get in the Way - Part I](#)
- [We Don't Let Planning Get in the Way - Part II](#)
- [Building a New Downtown - Part I](#)
- [Building a New Downtown - Part II](#)

For Planning Comm's Journal articles on new town center development, see:

- Phillip Langdon, [Creating the Missing Hub: How Today's Suburbs Build Town Centers](#)

Building a New Downtown – Part I

by PlannersWeb Editor Wayne Senville, reporting from Storrs, Connecticut

As someone who lives in a university town, I can tell you it's not every day that the university's and town's perspectives on a key issue are closely aligned.

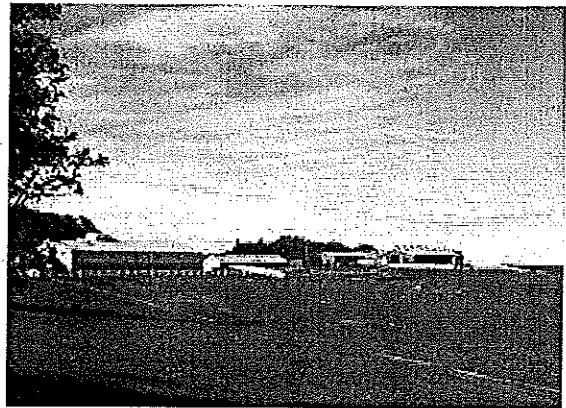
But that's the case in Storrs, Connecticut, where the University of Connecticut (UConn) and the Town of Mansfield both agree that what they really want and need is a new downtown center.

According to Cynthia van Zelm, who's Executive Director of the [Mansfield Downtown Partnership](#), townspeople for nearly half a century have wanted to develop a downtown hub for the community. But it's only been over the past 15 years or so, that they've come to realize that for this to happen, they needed UConn to be a partner.

Before getting too far into the story, let me back up for a minute and tell you a bit about Storrs. First, and most importantly, said Town Planner [Linda Painter](#) – it's not actually "Storrs" – "it's really Mansfield." But the name Storrs has stuck – and, in fact, that's what the new downtown center will be called.

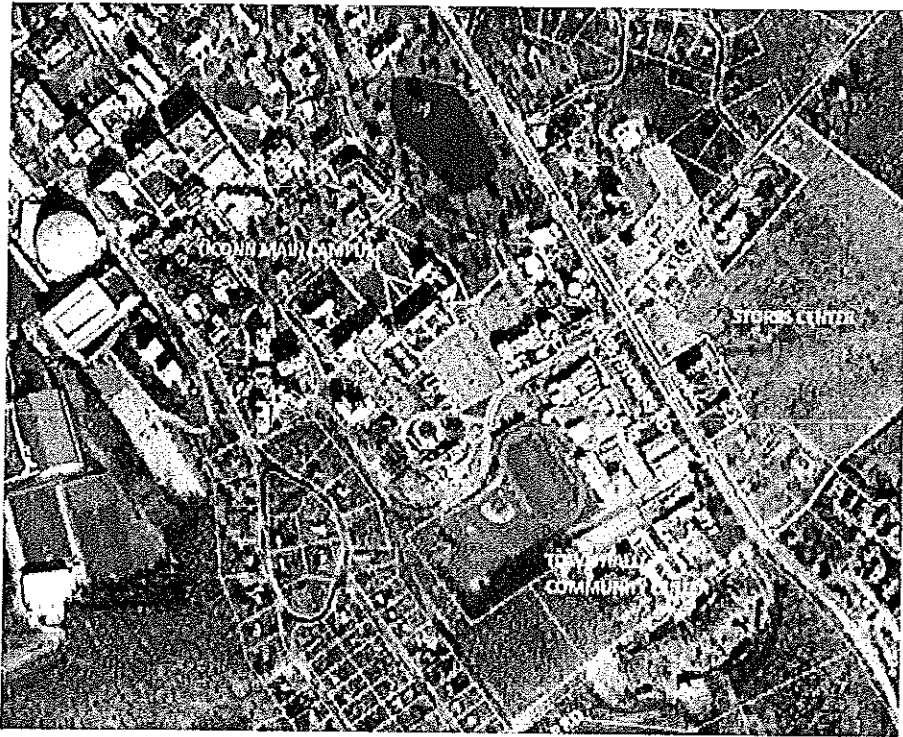
While less than 30 miles east of Hartford, it's a different world – with a largely rural, small-town feel. In driving around the town (which I hadn't visited in nearly 20 years), you're struck by the farmland, the natural beauty – and the many joggers and bicyclists.

At the same time, it's hard to avoid the behemoth in the middle of town – the enormous 3,100 acre UConn campus. As Painter pointed out, Mansfield has 26,000 residents, but at least half live on campus – "leaving probably around 10,000 year round permanent residents."



View on entering University of Connecticut campus area. All photos in this post by Wayne Senville.

- Kennedy Smith, What Makes a Town Center a Town Center



Aerial photo of main campus, University of Connecticut - Storrs. The site of the Storrs Center development is visible on the right.

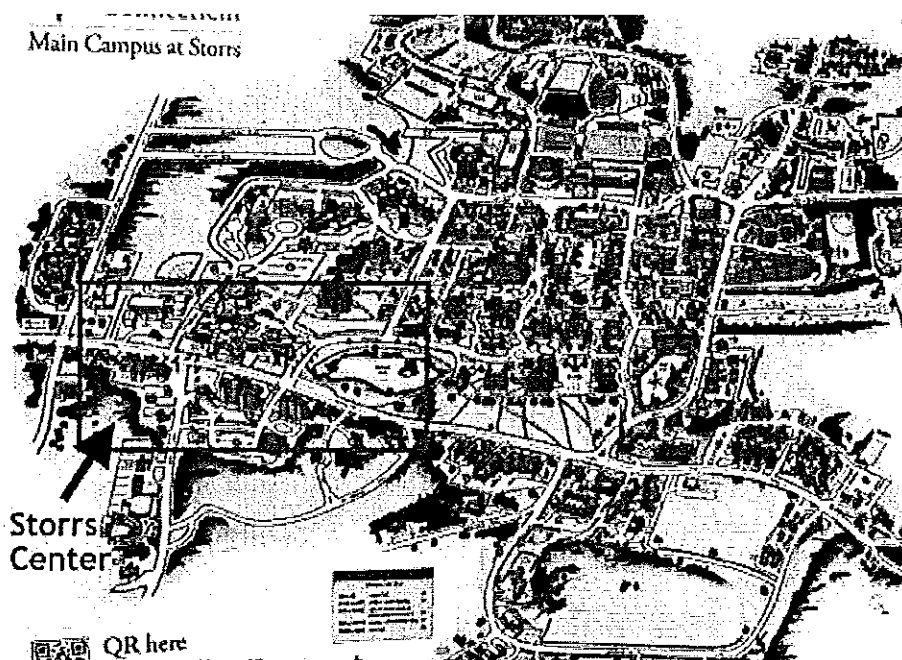
A Congruence of Interests

Matthew Hart, Mansfield's Town Manager, noted that while everyone appreciates the "great rural atmosphere," townspeople "were also looking to have a place that could become the heart and soul of our community." A public consensus emerged around several key principles:

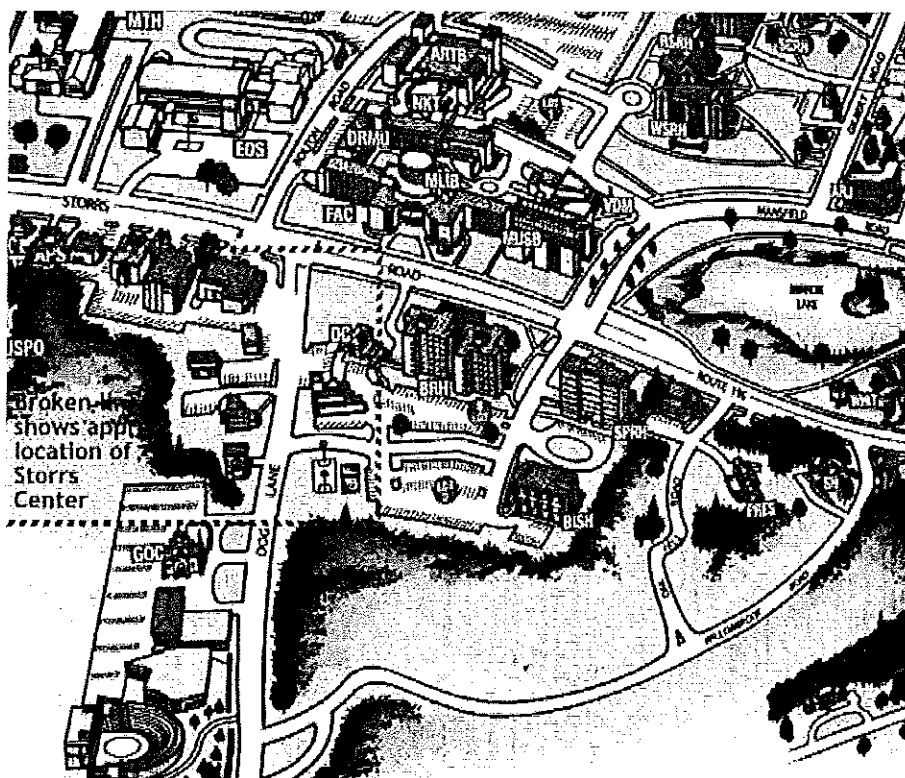
- having a mixed-use project, with commercial, housing, and office uses;
- making sure it resulted in a walkable downtown, close to key civic uses like the high school, community center, town hall, and post office; and
- incorporating sustainability and intelligent land use principles — like building on a smaller footprint with structured parking, and connecting to existing utilities.

The end result: Storrs Center — a new mixed-use downtown hub for the Town of Mansfield, now under construction.

For UConn, the desire for a downtown center was just as strong. As Robert Sitkowski, UConn's Real Estate Officer, explained, existing stores and dining spots were scattered across town and beyond. With a large and growing student population, the lack of having a lively, attractive, accessible downtown center put UConn at a competitive disadvantage in recruiting students. With Storrs Center, "we'll now have a physical destination to market."



The map above gives a sense of the large size of the Main Campus. The solid red rectangle is the area shown in the segment of the map below – with the dotted lines indicating very roughly the location of the Storrs Center project. A key take away: thousands of students will be within walking distance of Storrs Center.



Hart concurred: "We don't have what so many of our peer institutions have -- a downtown. UConn has recognized that the lack of off-campus amenities is the number one reasons students decide not to go to UConn."

Just how many students will be within walking distance of the Storrs Center development? Some numbers: 17,800 undergraduates – 75% of whom live on-

campus in one of 18 student residences (many located within an easy walk to Storrs Center); plus 6,600 grad students. Now that's a huge market. What's more, the campus bus service will connect to the intermodal center to be built at Storrs Center.



One of UConn's 18 residence halls. Many (such as this one) are located close to Storrs Center.

In part II of this post, we look at how the town, university, and a private developer worked together to bring a new downtown to Storrs, Connecticut.

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Tags: [On the Road](#), [Small Towns](#), [Downtowns](#), [Editor's Notes & Interviews](#), [Livable Communities](#), [Potpourri](#), [Public Participation Techniques](#)

No comments yet, add yours.

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ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

DECISION NOTICE

On September 12, 2012, the Mansfield Zoning Board of Appeals took the following action:

Approved the application of Marja Prewitt for a variance of Art VIII, Sec A to construct a covered porch on the front of their residence that would be 35' from the front property line where 40' is required, at 4 Pine Ridge Ln, as shown on submitted plan.

In favor of approving application: Accorsi, Clauson, Gotch, Katz, Welch

Reasons for voting in favor of application:

- Topography
- Will enhance appearance

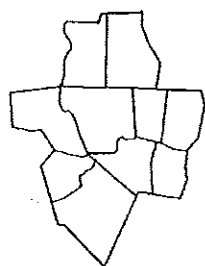
Application was approved.

Additional information is available in the Town Clerk's Office.

Dated September 13, 2012

Sarah Accorsi
Chairman

PAGE
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WINDHAM REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Chaplin Columbia Coventry Hampton Lebanon Mansfield Scotland Willington Windham

REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Date: September 5, 2012
Referral #: 12-07-19-WM
Report on: **Zoning**

WINDHAM
Numerous Zoning
Text and Map Changes

To: Town of Windham Planning and Zoning Commission
C/o: James Finger, Town Planner

Commissioners;

This referral involves: A proposal to make numerous changes to the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Map.

Receipt is hereby acknowledged of the above referral. Notice of this proposal was transmitted to the Windham Region Council of Governments under the provisions of Section 8-3b of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended.

Comments for Inclusion in the Public Record: The Regional Planning Commission reviewed the proposed amendments to the zoning regulations. The commission offers recommendations on how proposals can better meet the goals and vision of the Windham Region Land Use Plan, WINCOG's regional guide for conservation and development. The recommendations of the Regional Planning Commission are purely advisory.

- The Regional Planning Commission commends the efforts of the Windham Planning and Zoning Commission in striving to update the Windham Zoning Regulations and in creating additional subzones specific to Willimantic's unique neighborhoods.
- The proposed changes to the zoning districts within Willimantic and in North Windham are consistent with the Windham Region Land Use Plan 2010 which identifies these areas as part of the Regional Center, the highest priority for development. An exception is the runways at the Windham Airport which were not included in the area delineated as the Regional Center.
- The proposed changes to the zoning districts on Route 32 South are not consistent with the Windham Region Land Use Plan 2010. The Regional Plan does not identify this area as a development priority although the members of the Regional Planning Commission recognize that this stretch of highway contains existing development and is identified in the Windham Plan of Conservation and Development as "Commercial-Vehicular".
- The proposed changes to the procedures for Site Plan and Special Permit approvals are an excellent update over the existing sections. The proposed changes to the regulations

✓
Distribution: J. Finger, Windham; L. Painter, Mansfield; E. Trott, Coventry; J. Gigliotti, Chaplin; P. Chester, Lebanon; J. Butts, Columbia, SECCOG.

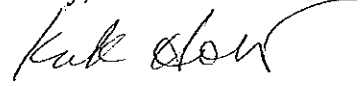
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concerning expansions of non-conforming structures are considered to provide flexibility and are therefore consistent with the goals of the Windham Region Land Use Plan.

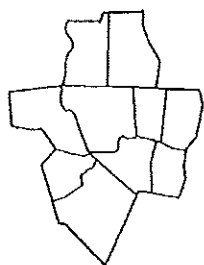
- The proposal is not anticipated to create negative intermunicipal impacts.

Questions concerning this referral should be directed to Jana Butts at the Windham Region Council of Governments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kath Holt", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Katherine Holt, Chair
WINCOG RPC



WINDHAM REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Chaplin Columbia Coventry Hampton Lebanon Mansfield Scotland Willington Windham

REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Date: September 5, 2012

Referral #: 12-08-14-WN

Report on: **Zoning**

WILLINGTON

Text and Map Changes

To: Town of Willington Planning and Zoning Commission
C/o: Susan Yorgensen, Town Planner

Commissioners;

This referral involves: A proposal to amend the regulations concerning fast food and septic system locations and other activities in proximity to rivers.

Receipt is hereby acknowledged of the above referral. Notice of this proposal was transmitted to the Windham Region Council of Governments under the provisions of Section 8-3b of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended.

Comments for Inclusion in the Public Record: The Regional Planning Commission reviewed the proposed amendments to the zoning regulations. The commission offers recommendations on how proposals can better meet the goals and vision of the Windham Region Land Use Plan, WINCOG's regional guide for conservation and development. The recommendations of the Regional Planning Commission are purely advisory.

- The Regional Planning Commission commends the efforts of the Willington Planning and Zoning Commission in striving to update the Willington Zoning Regulations concerning activities in proximity to rivers. The Windham Region Land Use Plan states:

Development in the Windham Region should not degrade water quality. Land within and surrounding public water supply recharge areas, lake watersheds, inland wetlands, and river and stream corridors should be used in a manner which protects water quality and quantity, preserves aquatic habitats, minimizes hazards to life and property from flooding, provides access (visual and/or physical) for recreational purposes, and retains to the maximum extent possible lake shores and stream banks in an undeveloped state such that their beauty can be enjoyed by future generations.

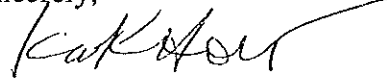
The proposal to regulate activities within 150' of watercourses is consistent with the Regional Land Use Plan.

✓
Distribution: S. Yorgensen, Willington; L. Painter, Mansfield; E. Trott, Coventry; CRCOG.
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- In regard to the proposed changes concerning the location of fast food establishments, the only two locations within the Town of Willington where this use is consistent with the Regional Land Use Plan is West Willington near the intersection of Routes 32 and 74 and the I-84 interchange on Ruby Road.

Questions concerning this referral should be directed to Jana Butts at the Windham Region Council of Governments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Katherine Holt", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Katherine Holt, Chair
WINCOG RPC

Jessie Neborsky

From: Center for Land Use Education and Research <clear@uconn-clear.ccsend.com> on behalf of Center for Land Use Education and Research <bruce.hyde@uconn.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, September 26, 2012 3:40 PM
To: PlanZoneDept
Subject: November 10th Land Use Academy Advanced Training: Registration Open

Having trouble viewing this email? [Click here](#)

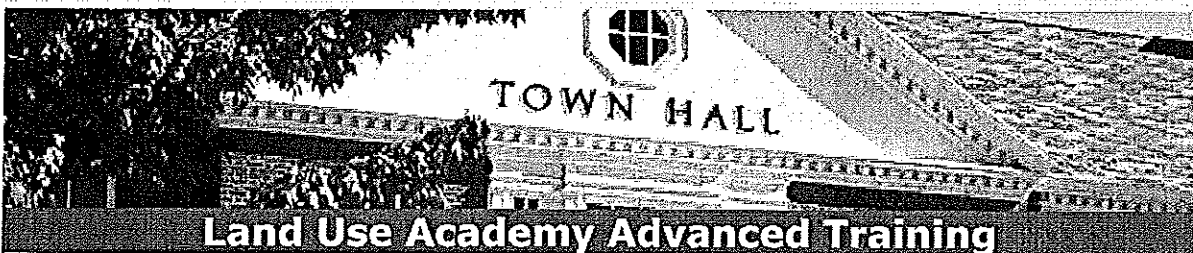
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Land Use Academy

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Join CLEAR



Join our
Mailing List

The Land Use Academy is offering an **Advanced Training** session on November 10, 2012 at CCSU in New Britain. The topics covered are listed below. Cost is \$40.

Follow the registration link at the bottom to register online or to obtain a registration form. We hope to see you in November!

Advanced Training

In response to feedback from both professional planners and land use commissioners, we are offering an all-day advanced training covering three topics in-depth.

ADVANCED TRAINING TOPICS COVERED:

Bias, Predisposition and Conflicts
Atty Richard Roberts, Halloran and Sage

Conditions and Modifications
Atty Kenneth Slater, Halloran and Sage

Running a Meeting and Making the Decision
Atty Mark Branse, Branse, Willis and Knapp

4.5 AICP CM Credits Pending

For More Information click on the Academy link to the left.

REGISTER NOW



Land Use Academy

Part of CLEAR Center for Land Use Education and Research

Advanced Overview & Course Descriptions

Contact Information: Bruce Hyde, Land Use Academy Coordinator
1066 Saybrook Rd, PO Box 70, Haddam, CT 06438 - Phone 860-345-3357

The Land use Academy Advanced Training is an all-day advanced course that will cover the following three topics in-depth. This training will include plenty of time for audience participation, questions, and observations. The training will be held at Central Connecticut State University In New Britain. Visit the land Use Academy website: <http://clear.uconn.edu/lua> to register.

4.5 AICP CM credits pending including 1.5 law credits

Bias, Pre-disposition and Conflicts

- ☐ How bias and conflicts are defined
- ☐ Ex-Parte communications
- ☐ Appearance and representation by Commission members
- ☐ Financial or other interests
- ☐ Relatives
- ☐ Conduct during the meeting
- ☐ Recusal

Conditions and Modifications

- ☐ Limits on use of conditions
- ☐ Variances
- ☐ Special Permits/Exceptions
- ☐ Off-site improvements
- ☐ Construction of public improvements
- ☐ Bonds
- ☐ Parking (reductions, waivers, shared)
- ☐ Open space requirements
- ☐ Payments in lieu

Running a Meeting and Making a Decision

- ☐ Pre-application meetings
- ☐ Keeping control of the meeting (who speaks, when, hostile crowd control, etc.)
- ☐ Voting by commissioner who misses a meeting
- ☐ Seating alternates
- ☐ Running a public hearing
- ☐ Evaluation of evidence
- ☐ 22a-19 Environmental interventions
- ☐ Standards and criteria
- ☐ Proper motions
- ☐ Findings
- ☐ Keeping the record
- ☐ What to do with reports (IWWC, traffic, CTDEP, neighboring towns, RPAs, consultants, etc.)